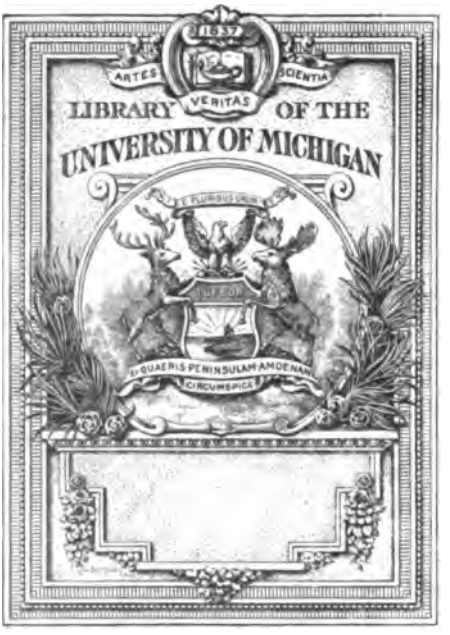
1837
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
E PLURIBUS UNUM
TUEBOR
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION).

FOURTH SERIES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

2 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE ELEVENTH DAY OF APRIL TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF APRIL, 1902

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1902.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,

UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,

BY

WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

HISTORY.

CONQUEST to 34 GEO. II.—1066 to 1760.

Vol. 1 to 15, 1 WILL. I. to 34 GEO. II. 1066-1760

REIGN OF GEORGE III.—1760 to 1820.

Vol. 15 to 35, 1 GEO. III. to 40 GEO. III. 1760-1800

(FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 35 .....41 GEO. III.....1801
— 36 .....42 — 1802

(SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 36 .....42 GEO. III. 1802-3

DEBATES.

First Series.

(SECOND PARLIAMENT—*continued.*)

Vol. 1 & 2...44 GEO. III.....1803-4
— 3 to 5...45 — 1805
— 6 & 7...46 — 1806

(THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 8 & 9...47 GEO. III. 1806-7

(FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 9 to 11...48 GEO. III. 1807-8
— 12 — 14...49 — 1809
— 15 — 17...50 — 1810
— 18 — 20...51 — ... 1810-11
— 21 — 23...52 — 1812

(FIFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 24 to 26...53 GEO. III. ... 1812-13
— 27 & 28...54 — ... 1813-14
— 29 to 31...55 — ... 1814-15
— 32 — 34...56 — 1816
— 35 & 36...57 — 1817
— 37 — 38...58 — 1818

(SIXTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 39 & 40...59 GEO. III. 1819
— 41 .....60 — ... 1819-20

Second Series.

REIGN OF GEORGE IV.—1820 to 1830

(SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3... 1 GEO. IV. 1820
— 4 & 5... 2 — 1821
— 6 — 7... 3 — 1822
— 8 — 9... 4 — 1823
— 10 — 11... 5 — 1824
— 12 — 13... 6 — 1825-6
— 14 — 15... 7 — 1826

(EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 16 ..... 7 GEO. IV. 1826
— 17 ..... 8 — 1827
— 18 & 19... 9 — 1828
— 20 — 21...10 — 1829
— 22 to 25...11 — 1830

Third Series.

REIGN OF WILLIAM IV.—1830 to 1837

(NINTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 1 to 3... 1 WILL. IV.....1830-1

(TENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 4 to 8... 2 WILL. IV. 1831
— 9 — 14... 3 — 1832

(ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 15 to 20... 4 WILL. IV. 1833
— 21 — 25... 5 — 1834

(TWELFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol. 26 to 30... 6 WILL. IV. 1835
— 31 — 35... 7 — 1836
— 36 — 38... 8 — 1837

REIGN OF VICTORIA—1837 to 1901.

(THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	39 to 44...	1 VICTORIA	1838
—	45 — 50...	2 —	1839
—	51 — 55...	3 —	1840
—	56 — 58...	4 —	(a) 1841

(FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	59	4 VICTORIA	(b) 1841
—	60 to 65...	5 —	1842
—	66 — 71...	6 —	1843
—	72 — 76...	7 —	1844
—	77 — 82...	8 —	1845
—	83 — 88...	9 —	1846
—	89 — 94...	10 —	(a) 1847

(FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	95	10 VICTORIA	(b) 1847
—	96 to 101...	11 —	1848
—	102 —107...	12 —	1849
—	108 —113...	13 —	1850
—	114 —118...	14 —	1851
—	119 —122...	15 —	(a) 1852

(SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	123	15 VICTORIA	(b) 1852
—	124 to 129...	16 —	1853
—	130 —135...	17 —	1854
—	136 —139...	18 —	1855
—	140 —143...	19 —	1856
—	144	20 —	(a) 1857

(SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	145 to 147...	20 VICTORIA	(b) 1857
—	148 —151 ..	21 —	1858
—	152 —153...	22 —	(a) 1859

(EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	154 to 155...	22 VICTORIA	(b) 1859
—	156 —160...	23 —	1860
—	161 —164...	24 —	1861
—	165 —168...	25 —	1862
—	169 —172...	26 —	1863
—	173 —176...	27 —	1864
—	177 —180...	28 —	1865

(NINETEENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	181 to 184...	29 VICTORIA	1866
—	185 —189...	30 —	1867
—	190 —193...	31 —	... 1867-8

(TWENTIETH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	194 to 198...	32 VICTORIA	... 1868-9
—	199 —203...	33 —	1870
—	204 —208...	34 —	1871
—	209 —213...	35 —	1872
—	214 —217...	36 —	1873

(TWENTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	218 to 221...	37 VICTORIA	1874
—	222 —226...	38 —	1875
—	227 —231...	39 —	1876
—	232 —236...	40 —	1877
—	237 —242...	41 —	1878
—	243 —249...	42 —	... 1878-9
—	250 & 251...	43 —	(a) 1880

(TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	252 to 256...	43 VICTORIA	(b) 1880
—	257 —265...	44 —	1881
—	266 —273...	45 —	(a) 1882
—	274 & 275...	45 —	(b) 1882
—	276 to 283...	46 —	1883
—	284 —292...	47 —	1884
—	293 —301...	48 —	... 1884-5

(TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	302 to 307...	49 VICTORIA	(a) 1886

(TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	308 & 309...	49 VICTORIA	(b) 1886
—	310 to 321...	50 —	1887
—	322 —332...	51 —	1888
—	333 —340...	52 —	1889
—	341 —348...	53 —	1890
—	349 —356...	54 —	... 1890-1

Fourth Series.

(TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT—*cont.*)

Vol.	1 to 6...	55 VICTORIA	1892

(TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	7	56 VICTORIA	1892
—	8 to 21...	57 —	... 1893-4
—	22 — 29...	57 —	1894
—	30 — 35...	58 —	1895

(TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	36	59 VICTORIA	1895
—	37 to 44...	59 —	... 1895-6
—	45 — 52...	60 —	1897
—	53 — 65...	61 —	1898
—	66 — 76...	62 —	1899
—	77	63 —	1899
—	78 — 83...	63 —	1900
—	84 ...	63 & 64 —	1900
—	85 — 87...	64 —	1900

(TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.)

Vol.	88	64 VICTORIA	1900

REIGN OF EDWARD VII.

(TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT—*cont.*)

Vol.	89	1 EDWARD VII.	...1901
—	90 to 100	1 —	...1901
—	101 ...	1 & 2 —	...1902
—	102 to 106	2 —	...1902

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE, ETC.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and Lord Privy Seal——Most Hon. the Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G.
Lord President of the Council——His Grace the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, K.G.
Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Earl of HALSBURY.
First Lord of the Treasury——Rt. Hon. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR.
Secretaries of State——
- Foreign Affairs——Most Hon. the Marquess of LANSDOWNE, K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.S.I.
- Home Department——Rt. Hon. CHARLES T. RITCHIE.
- Colonial——Rt. Hon. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.
- War——Rt. Hon. W. ST. JOHN BRODRICK.
- India——Rt. Hon. Lord GEORGE HAMILTON.

Chancellor of the Exchequer——Rt. Hon. Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bt.
First Lord of the Admiralty——Rt. Hon. the EARL OF SELBORNE.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland——Rt. Hon. Earl CADOGAN, K.G.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland——Rt. Hon. Lord ASHBOURNE.
President of the Board of Trade——Rt. Hon. GERALD W. BALFOUR.
Postmaster-General——Marquess of LONDONDERRY, K.G.
Secretary for Scotland——Rt. Hon. Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH.
President of the Local Government Board——Rt. Hon. WALTER H. LONG.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster——Rt. Hon. Lord JAMES OF HEREFORD
First Commissioner of Works——Rt. Hon. A. AKERS DOUGLAS.
President of the Board of Agriculture——Rt. Hon. R. W. HANBURY.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury——Rt. Hon. Sir W. WALROND, M.P.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury——J. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Esq., M.P
Chief Secretary for Ireland——Rt. Hon. GEORGE WYNDHAM, M.P.
Vice-President of the Board of Education——Rt. Hon. Sir J. ELDON GORST, K.C., M.P.
Secretary to the Admiralty——HUGH O. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Treasury——H. T. ANSTRUTHER, Esq., M.P.; WILLIAM HAYES FISHER, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Admiralty——Vice-Admiral Lord W. T. KERR, K.C.B.; Rear-Admiral A. L. DOUGLAS.; Rear-Admiral A. K. WILSON, V.C., C.B.; Capt. A. W. MOORE, C.B., C.M.G.
Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Office——Lord CRANBORNE, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Home Office——Rt. Hon. JESSE COLLINGS, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Colonial Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of ONSLOW, G.C.M.G.
Parliamentary Secretary, India Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of HARDWICKE.
Parliamentary Secretary, War Office——Rt. Hon. Lord RAGLAN.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade——Rt. Hon. Earl of DUDLEY.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board——J. GRANT LAWSON, Esq., M.P.
Financial Secretary, War Office——Lord STANLEY, M.P.
Attorney-General——Sir R. B. FINLAY, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor General——Rt. Hon. E. CARSON K.C., M.P.

OTHER OFFICERS OF STATE.

Judge Advocate-General——Rt. Hon. Sir F. H. JEUNE, K.C.B., President Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division.
Lord Chamberlain——Rt. Hon. Earl of Clarendon.
Vice-Chamberlain——Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Bt., M.P.
Lord Steward——Rt. Hon. Earl of PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY, G.C.V.O.
Master of the Horse——His Grace the Duke of PORTLAND, K.G., G.C.V.O.
Paymaster-General——His Grace the Duke of MARLBOROUGH.
Comptroller of the Household——Viscount VALENTIA, M.P.
Treasurer of the Household——VICTOR C. W. CAVENDISH, Esq., M.P.
Master of the Buckhounds——Right Hon. Lord CHESHAM.
Captain Yeomen of the Guard——Rt. Hon. Earl WALDEGRAVE.
Lords-in-Waiting——
- Rt. Hon. Earl of KINTORE, G.C.M.G.
- Rt. Hon. Earl of DENBIGH.
- Rt. Hon. Lord CHURCHILL, K.C.V.O.
- Rt. Hon. Earl HOWE.
- Rt. Hon. Lord LAWRENCE.
- Rt. Hon. Lord BAGOT.
- Rt. Hon. Lord SUFFIELD, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
- Rt. Hon. Lord KENYON.

SCOTLAND.

Secretary for Scotland and Keeper of the Great Seal——Rt. Hon. Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH.
Lord Justice-General——Rt. Hon. J. B. BALFOUR.
Lord Advocate——Rt. Hon. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, K.C., M.P.
Lord Justice Clerk——Rt. Hon. Lord KINSBURGH, C.B.
Lord Clerk Register——His Grace the Duke of MONTROSE, K.T.
Lord High Commissioner——Rt. Hon. Earl of LEVEN AND MELVILLE.
Solicitor-General——CHARLES SCOTT DICKSON, Esq., K.C., M.P.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant——Rt. Hon. Earl CADOGAN, K.G.
Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Lord ASHBOURNE.
Chief Secretary——Rt. Hon. GEORGE WYNDHAM, M.P.
Under Secretary——Rt. Hon. Sir DAVID HARREL, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.
Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction——President: The Rt. Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND; Vice-President: Rt. Hon. HORACE PLUNKETT.
Attorney-General——Rt Hon. J. ATKINSON, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor-General——GEO. WRIGHT, Esq., K.C.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Chairman of Committees——Rt. Hon. Earl of MORLEY.
Clerk of Parliaments——HENRY J. L. GRAHAM, Esq., C.B.
Deputy Clerk of Parliaments (Clerk Assistant)——Hon. E. P. THESIGER, C.B.
Reading-Clerk and Clerk of Outdoor Committees——EDWARD HALL ALDERSON, Esq.
Counsel to the Chairman of Committees——ALBERT GRAY, Esq.
Chief Clerk and Taxing Officer of Private Bill Costs——R. W. MONRO, Esq.
Clerk of Public Bills——A. HARRISON, Esq.
Senior Clerks——
- Peers' Printed Paper Office——C. L. ANSTRUTHER, Esq.
- Principal Clerk, Judicial Department, and Taxing Officer of Judicial Costs——J. F. SKENE, Esq.
- Clerk of the Journals——W. A. LEIGH, Esq.
- Principal Clerk of Private Committees——J. F. SYMONS JEUNE, Esq.

Other Clerks——W. H. HAMILTON GORDON, Esq.; C. L. ANSTRUTHER, Esq. (Clerk attending the Table); Hon. A. MCDONNELL, A. H. ROBINSON, Esq. (Clerk of Private Bills); H. P. ST. JOHN, Esq.; V. M. BIDDULPH, Esq.; Hon. E. A. STONOR; H. J. F. BADELEY, Esq.; C. HEADLAM, Esq.; J. B. HOTHAM, Esq.; E. C. VIGORS, Esq.; and A. TENNYSON, Esq.
Accountant——G. FULKES, Esq.
Copyist——Mr. T. A. COURT; Assistant Copyist——Mr. H. P. NORRIS.
Messengers——Messrs. A. A. WORFELL, C. E. CHIZLETT, A. M. STOLL, J. W. F. LOCKE, J. MCMILLAN, G. BENNETT, G. T. PHILIP.
Librarian——S. ARTHUR STRONG, Esq.
Assistant Librarian——A. H. M. BUTLER, Esq.
Attendant——Mr. W. WORFELL.
Examiners for Standing Orders——C. W. CAMPION, Esq.; J. F. SYMONS JEUNE, Esq.; Clerk——B. H. FELL, Esq.
Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod——Gen. Sir Michael A. S. BIDDULPH, G.C.B.
Yeoman Usher——Captain T. D. BUTLER.
Serjeant-at-Arms——Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir FLEETWOOD I. EDWARDS, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms——S. HAND, Esq.
Resident Superintendent——J. K. WILLIAMS, Esq.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—(*Cont.*)

Shorthand Writer——W. H. GURNEY SALTER, Esq.
Principal Doorkeepers——Messrs. W. CHANDLER, E. FOX, F. HOLMAN.
First Class Assistants——Messrs. C. WALKER, J. HEDLEY, J. LANE.
Second Class Assistants——Messrs. B. GALLOP, H. B. STREVENS, G. W. CROSS, W. STOPP.
Third Class Assistants——Messrs. J. WOOLACOTT, A. A. EDNEY, J. F. BAUM.
Messengers——Messrs. A. J. SOLMAN, J. B. FORSYTH, C. CHAPMAN, W. PHILLIPS, W. W. MEATES.
Superintendent of Refreshment Rooms——Mr. W. CASBON.
Inspector of Police attending the House of Lords——Mr. T. KENDRICK.
Clerk of the Works, Houses of Parliament——Mr. C. J. WILLIAMS.
Resident Engineer " " " ——Mr. A. P. PATEY.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Clerk of the House of Commons——Sir COURTNEY PEREGRINE ILBERT, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.
Clerk-Assistant——FRANCIS B. G. JENKINSON, Esq., C.B.
Second Clerk-Assistant——ARTHUR W. NICHOLSON, Esq.
Principal Clerks——
Public Bill Office, and Clerk of Fees——W. GIBBONS, Esq.
Clerk of the Journals——W. H. LEY, Esq.
Committee Office——R. DICKINSON, Esq.
Private Bill Office——J. H. W. SOMERSET, Esq.
Senior Clerks——F. ST. GEORGE TUPPER, Esq.; H. C. TOWER, Esq.; C. V. FRERE, Esq.; L. T. LE MARCHANT, Esq.; G. C. GIFFARD, Esq.; Sir E. H. DOYLE, Bart.
Assistant Clerks——S. L. SIMEON, Esq.; ARTHUR I. DASENT, Esq.; E. C. HOWE BROWNE, Esq.; HORACE WEST, Esq.; HENRY A. FERGUSON-DAVIE, Esq.; ARTHUR H. ELLIS, Esq.; PERCY A. BULL, Esq.; F. R. WILLIAMS WYNN, Esq.; W. E. GREY, Esq.; F. C. HOLLAND, Esq.; J. W. G. BOND, Esq.; T. L. WEBSTER, Esq.
Junior Clerks——H. C. DAWKINS, Esq.; A. F. B. WILLIAMS, Esq.; R. P. COLOMB, Esq.; B. H. FELL, Esq.; R. E. CHILDERS, Esq.; J. SCOTT PORTER, Esq.; F. C. BRAMWELL, Esq.; W. T. LEGGE, Esq.; C. R. TURNER, Esq.; W. K. GIBBONS, Esq.; A. E. A. W. SMYTH, Esq; K. J. C. MOORSOM, Esq.
Serjeant-at-Arms——H. D. ERSKINE, Esq.
Deputy Serjeant——F. R. GOSSET, Esq.
Assistant Serjeant——W. H. ERSKINE, Esq.
Chaplain to the House——Rev. Archdeacon BASIL WILBERFORCE, D.D.
Secretary to the Speaker——EDWARD GULLY, Esq.
Counsel to the Speaker——Hon. Sir E. CHANDOS LEIGH, K.C., K.C.B.
Trainbearer——MR. J. FRENCH.
Messenger——Mr. W. MURRELL.
Collectors of Fees on Private Bills——C. L. LOCKTON, Esq.
Referee of Private Bills——ALFRED BONHAM CARTER, Esq., C.B.
Examiners of Private Bills——C. W. CAMPION, Esq., J. F. SYMONS JEUNE, Esq.
Taxing Master——C. W. CAMPION, Esq.; Clerk——B. H. FELL, Esq.
Vote Office——
Chief Clerk——H. A. M. KILLICK, Esq.
Assistant Clerks——PHILIP SMITH, Esq., H. OTWAY MAYNE, Esq.
Messenger——Mr. JOHN EDWARDS.
Librarian——R. C. WALPOLE, Esq.; Assistant Librarian——E. G. HARVEY, Esq.; Clerks in Library——Messrs. J. R. CRIMP, WM. STEWART; Messengers——Messrs. A. FIRMIN, W. HAGUE.
Shorthand Writer——W. H. GURNEY SALTER, Esq.
Printers——
Journals——G. E. BRISCOE EYRE, Esq.
Votes——J. B. NICHOLS, Esq.
Postmaster——Mr. EDMUND W. PIKE; Hall Keeper——Mr. J. GLYNN.
Office Keeper——Mr. W. HARVEY.
Office Clerk in Committee Office——Mr. T. FIELDEN MITCHELL.
Office Clerk in Journal Office——Mr. A. A. TAYLOR.
Messengers——Messrs. J. J. SHELVEY, C. DAVIE, W. QUANTRILL, H. JONES, J. ARMSTRONG, J. WOODWARD, J. IVORY, G. NORMAN.
Doorkeepers——Mr. W. WILSON, Mr. M. INGLEFIELD.
Office Messenger——Mr. C. J. H. SHEARN.
Messengers (1st Class)——Mr. H. HAMBLING, Mr. C. WOODCRAFT, Mr. R. ROBERTSON, Mr. J. HILLS, Mr. J. SPRAGUE, Mr. A. ANDREWS, Mr. T. B. SPRAY, Mr. G. TYE, MR. R. HOBBY, Mr. G. ANSTEY, Mr. J. H. DAY.
Messengers (2nd Class)——Messrs. J. HENDERSON, G. WAINWRIGHT, J. GUYATT, R. TURTLE, A. HASKELL, A. C. JOHNSON, G. CLAPPERTON, H. E. LININGTON.
Superintendent of Members' Waiting Room——MR. J. F. HENLEY; Assistant——MR. W. BROADBENT; Porters——Messrs. J. ORAM, T. MARTIN.
Chief Inspector of Police attending the House of Commons——Mr. SCANTLEBURY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME CVI.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION, 1902.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 11TH APRIL, 1902.

The House met at Three of the Clock.

April 11.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

April 11.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

QUESTIONS.

April 11.] *Page*

April 11.] *Page*

April 11.] *Page*

NEW PROCEDURE RULES.—NINTH DAY'S DEBATE.

The House divided :—Ayes, 199; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 101.)

Amendment proposed—

"After line 11, to add the words—'(e) At the Evening Sittings at which Government Business has not precedence Notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the Day.'" (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words—'(f) At all Afternoon Sittings the House will first proceed with Petitions, Motions for Unopposed Returns, and Leave of Absence to Members, giving Notices of Motions, and Unopposed Private Business.'" (*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words—'And no Motion to the effect that the House shall otherwise direct than is in this Order provided, or for the suspension of this Order, shall be moved, unless it has appeared at latest on the Notice Paper circulated two days before that to which it applies." (*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 129; Noes, 187. (Division List No. 102.)

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Mr. A. J. Balfour rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

April 11.] *Page*

The House divided :—Ayes, 160 ; Noes, 104. (Division List No. 103.)

Main question, as amended, put accordingly.

The House divided :—Ayes, 160 ; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 104.)

The new Standing Order (Priority of Business), as finally adopted, is as follows :—

That, unless the House otherwise direct—

(*a*) *Government Business shall have precedence at every Sitting except the Evening Sittings on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the Sitting on Friday.*

(*b*) *At the Evening Sittings of Tuesday and Wednesday notices of Motion and Public Bills, other than Government Bills, shall have precedence of Government Business.*

(*c*) *After Easter Government Business shall have precedence at the Evening Sittings of Tuesday.*

(*d*) *After Whitsuntide, until Michaelmas, Government Business shall have precedence at all Evening Sittings, and at all Friday Sittings except the Sittings on the third and fourth Fridays after Whit Sunday.*

(*e*) *At the Evening Sittings at which Government Business has not precedence Notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the Day.*

(*f*) *At all afternoon Sittings the House will first proceed with Petitions, Motions for unopposed Returns, and Leave of Absence to Members, giving Notices of Motions, and Unopposed Private Business.*

NEW STANDING ORDER (BUSINESS IN SUPPLY).—Motion made and Question proposed—

"As soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first order of the day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the Question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

"Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any vote of Credit, or of Votes for Supplementary or Additional Estimates presented by the Government for War Expenditure, shall not be included in the computation of the twenty days aforesaid.

"Provided also that on Motion made after Notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

April 11.] *Page*

"On a day so allotted, no business other than business of Supply shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one Sitting to the Report of that Vote. At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the Sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the Question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the Questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the Question: That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like Question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the days appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order, two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out the word 'Thursday,' and insert the word 'Monday.'"—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Thursday' stand part of the Question."

April 11.] *Page*

April 14.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 14.] *Page*

April 14.] *Page*

April 14.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 14.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

April 14.] *Page*

April 14.] *Page*

April 14.] *Page*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

April 15.] *Page*

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 254; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 108.)

Resolved, That there shall be charged on and after the 15th day of April, 1902, the following customs import duties—

	£	s.	d.
Corn and grain of all kinds, and peas, beans, and lentils the cwt.	0	0	3
Flour and all kinds of meal and prepared grain, starch, and all farinaceous and starchy substances used as articles of food ... ... the cwt.	0	0	5

Resolution to be reported tomorrow, Committee to sit again tomorrow.

Adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, APRIL 15TH, 1902.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificates from the examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—

April 15.] *Page*

PETITION.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 15th APRIL, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

Page

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

April 15.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

April 15.] *Page*

April 15.] *Page*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

LOAN.

1. Motion made, and Question put, "That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, sums not exceeding £32,000,000 may be raised by means of the creation of 2¾ per cent. Consolidated Stock within the meaning of The National Debt (Conversion) Act, 1888; and that any annuities forming stock so created be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

April 15.] *Page*

"That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 229; Noes, 102. (Division List No. 110.)

STAMP DUTY (BILLS OF EXCHANGE).

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That on and after July 1st, 1902, two pence shall be substituted for one penny as the Stamp Duty on Bills of Exchange payable on demand, or at sight, or on presentation, or within three days after date or sight."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 186; Noes, 119. (Division List No. 111.)

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question put.

April 15.] *Page*

April 16.] *Page*

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 16TH APRIL, 1902.

The House met at 12 of the clock.

April 16.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 17TH APRIL, 1902.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

Belfast Corporation Bill [By Order.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Corporation Bill to insert a clause providing that the Ulster Hall be available for the use of any section of the community of Belfast who comply with the general regulations laid down by the Corporation for the letting and use of the hall; and shall not be refused on religious or political grounds by the Corporation to any body of citizens who desire to use it."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 116.)

April 17.] *Page*

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

PETITIONS.

April 17.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 17.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND)—PROCLAMATION. — [Motion for Adjournment.]

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford), rose in his place, and asked leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the proclamation of

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 17.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

April 17.] *Page*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND)—PROCLAMATION. — [Motion for Adjournment.]

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford), rose in his place, and asked leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the proclamation of

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 18TH APRIL, 1902.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord CHANCELLOR acquainted the House. That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—
City of London (Spitalfields Market).
Commercial Gas.
Furness Railway (Steam Vessels).
Gloucestershire Electric Power.
Great Western Railway (Crumlin Viaduct).
Great Eastern Railway.
Higham Ferrers and Rushden Water Board.
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Newcastle-on-Tyne Electric Supply.

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Weardale and Shildon District Water [H.L.] (Petition for additional Provision).

April 18.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 18.] *Page*

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

Page

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 18TH APRIL, 1902.

April 18.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

April 18.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

QUESTIONS.

April 18.] *Page*

April 18.] *Page*

Page

NEW BILLS.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1902–3.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,411,250 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Working Expenses of the Post Office Telegraph Service."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Maintenance of the Postal Telegraph System) be reduced by £100."—(*Captain Norton.*)

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 165. (Division List. No. 118.)

Original Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £5,961,815 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the collection of the Post Office Revenue.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the salary of the Postmaster General."—(*Mr. Thomas Bayley.*)

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 110; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 119.)

Original Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,961,715, be granted for the said Service."—(*Captain Norton.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 83; Noes, 145. (Division List No. 120.)

April 21.] *Page*

April 21.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 21ST APRIL, 1902.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 159; Noes, 178. (Division List No. 123.)

April 21.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

April 21.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 21.] *Page*

ELECTRIC SUPPLY UNDERTAKINGS (COMPANIES).—Return ordered, "relating to authorised Electricity Supply Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Companies for the year 1900, in the following form—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11		12		13		14		15		16
Name of Company.	Date of Act of Parliament or Provisional Order.	Area of supply.	Total capital authorised at end of year.	Total capital called up at end of year.	Total borrowing powers.	Total loan capital borrowed at end of year.	Total capital expended at end of year.	Receipts during year.		Expenditure on maintenance, &c., during year.	Reserve Fund.		Depreciation fund.		Net Profit or loss for year.		Price per Board of Trade unit.		Quantity of energy generated and sold.		Dividend paid on ordinary shares.
								Public Lighting.	Sale of energy, and other receipts.		(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year.	(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year.	Profit.	Loss.	Maximum authorised.	Charged.	Units generated.	Units sold.	

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 343, of Session 1901."—(*Mr. Bartley*) 796

SOUTH AFRICA (TRANSPORTS).—Return ordered, "showing the name, tonnage, and speed of each vessel employed to convey troops to South Africa, since the 1st day of April, 1901, and up to and ending 31st day of March, 1902, the date and port of her departure from these shores, and arrival at Cape Town, Durban, or elsewhere respectively, including arrival at and departure from intermediate port of call; the number of troops and horses or mules carried on each occasion, the number of horses or mules lost on voyage, vessels provided with new pattern fittings, vessels provided with old pattern fittings, vessels provided with slings for each horse or mule, vessels not so provided; and the time occupied by each vessel in making the voyage, in the following form—

Name of vessel.	Tonnage.	Speed.	Date of departure and port.		Date of arrival and departure from intermediate ports.			Date of arrival and port.		Time occupied on voyage.	Number of troops carried.	Number of horses or mules carried.	Number of horses or mules lost on voyage.	Whether provided with new pattern or old pattern fittings.	Whether provided with slings for each horse or mule.
			Port.	Departure.	Port.	Arrival.	Departure.	Cape Town.	Durban.						

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 374, of Session 1901)."—(*Sir John Colomb*) 797

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 797

April 21.] *Page*

Page

NEW BILL.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 290; Noes, 61. (Division List No. 124.)

Resolution to be reported tomorrow; Committee to sit again tomorrow.

April 22.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

April 22.] *Page*

April 22.] *Page*

April 22.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

April 22.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

Page

April 22.] *Page*

April 24.] *Page*

April 24.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Name or description of article.	Quantity imported during year ended 31st March, 1902.	Rate of duty.	Amounts which would have been contributed by each article.
		d.	£ s. d.

QUESTIONS.

April 24.] *Pag*

April 24.] *Page*

April 24.] *Page*

April 24.] *Page*

"Provided also that on Motion made after notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply, shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the report of that Vote. At Midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the question, That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the day appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than Two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Which Amendment was—

"In line 6, to leave out the words 'Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consid-

April 24.] *Page*

April 24.] *Page*

PETITIONS.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Name or description of article.	Quantity imported during year ended 31st March, 1902.	Rate of duty.	Amounts which would have been contributed by each article.
		d.	£ s. d.

QUESTIONS.

April 24.] *Pag*

April 24.] *Page*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182; Noes, 259. (Division List No. 130.)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Tully, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Baird and Sir Albert Rollit; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Mr. Rigg, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Runciman, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Gretton and Sir Frederick Godson.

Shop Clubs Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. (No. 157.)

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee to be printed. [No. 157.]

"Provided also that on Motion made after notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply, shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the report of that Vote. At Midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the question, That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the day appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than Two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Which Amendment was—

"In line 6, to leave out the words 'Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consid-

April 25.] *Page*

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 25th APRIL, 1902.

The House met at Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

April 25.] *Page*

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

QUESTIONS.

April 25.] *Page*

April 25.] *Page*

NEW BILLS.

NEW PROCEDURE RULES.—[ELEVENTH DAY'S DEBATE.]

NEW STANDING ORDER (BUSINESS IN SUPPLY).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [11th April], "That as soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the Day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

"Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any Vote of Credit, or of Votes for Supplementary or Additional Estimates presented by the Government for War Expenditure, shall not be included in the computation of the Twenty days aforesaid.

"Provided also that on Motion made after Notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply, shall, except on the last two allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the Report of that Vote. At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments, be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock of the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put with respect to each

class of the Civil Service Estimates, the question, that the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the days appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business."

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Main Question again proposed.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 8, after the word 'Account,' to insert the words 'and not less than five of these days shall be allotted to Irish Supply."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 135; Noes, 218. (Division List No. 133.)

Amendment proposed—

"In line 8, after the word 'Account,' to insert the words 'and, in the consideration of the Estimates, Notices of Motion as to any Vote or any Item in any Vote, unless the House otherwise direct, shall be placed in order according to a classification to be made by Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means from time to time, and all such Notices of Motion shall specify the object for which such Motion shall be made.'"—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

April 25.] *Page*

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 15, after the word 'Expenditure,' to insert the words 'or for any new service not included in the ordinary Estimates for the year.'"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

April 25.] *Page*

April 25.] *Page*

It being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOLUME CVI.

ERRATA.

April 14, 1902. MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs). On page 221, the extract from the speech of Mr. Henry Hays Hammond (one of the greatest mining experts in South Africa) was as follows :—"I would regard the sum of 6*s*. per ton of ore crushed, or the sum of £4,826,535 per annum, as a Conservative estimate of the direct and indirect benefits of good government. Mr. Eckstein put the saving as high as 10*s*. per ton, or nearly 8 million sterling per annum of a saving."

Page 221, line 6 from bottom, after "police" insert "to prevent the enormous thefts of gold amalgam, by which," etc.

Page 222, after line 8, insert "Several mining experts had spoken in even stronger language than he had used of the resources of the Transvaal. Here was the letter of Mr. Rathbone, mining inspector in the Transvaal :—'After a long residence in the Transvaal, and an intimate knowledge of its great mineral resources, I am convinced that the recuperative powers of the country is not only sufficient to pay off the enormous debt *several times* over, but I feel confident that under Lord Milner's wise and tactful administration, it will be found that a great season of prosperity, far greater than the country has ever yet experienced, will shortly take place.'"

Page 222, line 16, alter "ship-building" to "ship-owning."

Page 222, line 26, after "on that point" the speech concludes thus: "Then I think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has scarcely been fair in the manner in which he has dealt with the Scottish industry of manufacturing and washing nuts from ordinary dross, which of itself is of little value and would be exempt from the tax. The patent fuel which is manufactured in Wales, and which fetches a high price, has been exempted from the tax, while the article manufactured in Scotland is not, notwithstanding the fact that a memorial on the subject, signed by twenty-three Scottish Unionist Members, had been presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Every one of these hon. Members satisfied themselves of the justice of the memorial before signing it, and therefore I do think that when Scotland returns so many staunch supporters of the Union, it is scarcely fair that no attention has hitherto been paid to their desires on this point."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

SIXTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 11*th April*, 1902.

The House met at Three of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

Liverpool Corporation Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time upon Monday next.

FURNESS RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS BILL).

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

NOTTINGHAM AND RETFORD RAILWAY BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

GRAND JUNCTION WATER BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

SOUTHPORT AND LYTHAM TRAMROAD BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

TIPTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Ordered, That the Order [5th February] that the Tipton Urban District Council Bill be committed, be read and discharged. Bill withdrawn. (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2).

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Secretary of State under the Military Lands Act, 1892, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Brodrick and Lord Stanley.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Aberdare, Amble, Dover, Frinton-on-Sea, Gillingham (Kent), Hindhead and District, Leadgate, Leatherhead District (Ashstead and Mickleham), Paignton, and Stanley (Durham), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Secretary of State under the Military Lands Act, 1892," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 145.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Aberdare, Amble, Dover, Frinton-on-Sea, Gillingham (Kent), Hindhead and District, Leadgate, Leatherhead District (Ashstead and Mickleham), Paignton, and Stanley (Durham)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 146.]

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee—

1. "That, in the case of the London United Tramways Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 8 be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill, Petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional provision provided the Committee on the Bill think fit."

3. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of the Petition of the 'Metropolitan Registered Lodging House Keepers' Association, and Registered Lodging House Keepers in the Metropolis' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

4. "That, in the case of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 11 be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

5. "That, in the case of the South Shields, Sunderland, and District Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

6. "That, in the case of the Exeter and District Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10, and so much of Tramways Nos. 2 and 3 as lie within the boundaries of the city of

Exeter, be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

7. "That, in the case of the Birmingham and Midland Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 1 be struck out of the Bill, and that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 7, 7A, 8, 9, 9A, and 9B, be struck out of the Bill, unless the consent of the Oldbury Urban District Council be proved before the Committee on the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

8. "That, in the case of the Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided the powers for the proposed extension tramway be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

9. "That, in the case of the Mexborough and Swinton Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS.

Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goulding and Mr. Ridley.

PETITIONS.

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FRESH WATER FISH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Dumbarton and Cupar Eden; to lie upon the Table.

GROCERS' CERTIFICATES (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh and Leith, against; to lie upon the Table.

HONORARY FREEDOM OF BOROUGHS EXTENSION BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Westminster and St. Marylebone; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Amhurst Park; Woburn Sands; Ulverston; Sheffield; Kentish Town; Northmavine; Taunton; Burnley; and York; to lie upon the Table.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Turiff; Larkhall; and Lochans; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petition from Dumbarton for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Malton and Chepstow; to lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TAXATION OF FEU DUTIES FOR LOCAL PURPOSES.

Petition from Kilmarnock, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2762 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 10th April; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 10th April; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136.]

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson.*]

(3.35.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any information to give to the House as to events in South Africa.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): No, Sir. His Majesty's Government is not at present in receipt of any communication with regard to terms from the Boer leaders.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Has Lord Kitchener been authorised to offer any other terms than those already offered.

MR. BRODRICK: I am not in a position to make any statement on that subject.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government are in possession of the terms in which Mr. Schalk Burger and the other Transvaal representatives asked for safe conduct, and the reasons they assigned for that request; and, if so, whether they will communicate this information to the House; whether Mr. Steyn and the Orange River representatives are meeting the Transvaal representatives at Klerksdorp on the suggestion of the Government of Lord Kitchener or on the invitation of the Transvaal representatives; and whether the Government are in possession of the terms of this suggestion or invitation; if so, will they communicate it to the House.

MR. BRODRICK: I have nothing to add to the statement which I made yesterday.

MR. BLACK: May I ask whether there is any word of an armistice during the absence of the commandants from their districts?

MR. BRODRICK: There will certainly not be an armistice.

General Botha's Home.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the reasons for the blowing up by the British soldiery of Commandant General Botha's home at Waterfall Vreheid; and can the War Office give approximately the date of the destruction of this house, which was intact in August last.

MR. BRODRICK: No report of such an occurrence has been received at the War Office.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL. Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Well, I know it to be true.

The Sutherland Skirmish.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will ask Lord Kitchener his reasons for withholding from the War Office the details of the engagement of the 24th March last, having regard to the fact that he has supplied the list of casualties without any particulars of the action.

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Quite right

French Ambulance for the Boers.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Vicomte Villebois Mareuil, whose application to be permitted to conduct an ambulance service to the Boer farms has been refused by the War Office, has asked permission to forward medical necessaries for the use of the Boer commandoes; and, if so, what reply has been given to this request.

MR. BRODRICK: The answer again is no.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman decline to answer the Question, or is it the fact that these medical requisites have been refused?

MR. BRODRICK: No application to this effect has been received from Vicomte Villebois Mareuil.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has the right hon. Gentleman refused to entertain an application?

[No answer was returned.]

Volunteer Kits.

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the existing regimental regulations of the Volunteer forces could be modified to allow of boots being supplied as part of the existing kit, or in lieu of less useful articles, such as dress tunic for special ceremonial parades.

MR. BRODRICK: I will consider this suggestion, but I fear that there may be difficulties about carrying it out.

Medical Examination of Yeomanry Recruits.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to a new attestation form (Army Form E 595) for Yeomanry recruits issued to Home Yeomanry regiments, in which a certificate of medical examination is required in the form set out; whether the only persons allowed by the War Office to medically examine recruits for the Home Yeomanry are all medical officers and civil practitioners authorised to examine recruits and medical officers of regiments of Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain; whether it has been brought to his notice that in agricultural counties this regulation either entails on recruits living remote from an authorised medical examiner loss of time and expense in travelling, or similar loss to medical officers of Yeomanry regiments who are civil practitioners; and whether, with the view of preventing detriment to recruiting, he will sanction the medical examination of recruits for the Imperial Yeomanry, in Great Britain, by any resident civil practitioner at places where an officer qualified under the regulation mentioned is not available, or will he consider the advisability of compensating the recruits and Yeomanry medical officers for their losses and expenses.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): It rests with the General Officer Commanding and the Principal Medical Officer of each command to make the necessary arrangements for the examination of Yeomanry recruits, and, to meet the special circumstances of the Yeomanry, extra civil medical practitioners can be appointed when necessary, the expenses being recovered under the conditions of Paragraph 483 of the Militia Regulations.

Colonial Contingents—Terms of Service.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Colonial contingents now serving in South Africa are enlisted for a definite term; and, if so, for how long; whether within the last twelve months any Colonial contingents have been enlisted for the period of the war; and whether any Imperial Yeoman or Volunteer Service Companies have been enlisted for a definite term.

MR. BRODRICK: The Colonial contingents now serving in South Africa have been enlisted on various terms, but in many instances for the period of the war. Oversea contingents have been recently enlisted for one year or the period of the war. The Imperial Yeomanry raised under Special Army Order of 19th December, 1901, were enlisted for a year or the period of the war. The Volunteer Service Companies enlisted

under February Army Orders were enlisted for a year, of which not more than nine months will be spent in South Africa.

In reply to a further Question,

MR. BRODRICK repeated that some of the Colonial men had enlisted for a year only.

Remount Supplies.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Lord Kitchener has reported the absence of horses up country for a large number of trained regular soldiers belonging to the mounted branches of His Majesty's forces; whether there are also engaged in warlike operations a considerable number of the police, especially picked for mounted duty, who are without horses; whether Lord Kitchener still reports the supply of horses in South Africa to be sufficient, and what steps the Government are now taking to increase the supply of ponies or small horses, especially South African or British bred.

LORD STANLEY: I have no information in regard to the first and second paragraphs of the Question; no such report has been received from Lord Kitchener. Lord Kitchener has reported that the numbers proposed to be forwarded to South Africa during March, April, and May would meet his requirements. Over 14,000 horses were shipped in March.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The first paragraph of my Question is based on information from South Africa; the second on a statement of fact by the Government.

Horse Purchases.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can say what horses have been purchased during March, and from what countries they have been drawn.

LORD STANLEY: 1,245 horses were purchased in Great Britain and 183 in Ireland during March. It is not possible to state the exact number of horses purchased abroad, as the accounts for March are not yet to hand, but 6,546 horses were shipped from Fiume; 5,365 from the United States of America, and 751 from Canada.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will say what horses have recently been purchased at Preston; and whether those purchased were sent to Carlisle to be inspected and then sent to Aldershot; and, if so, why was this expense incurred.

LORD STANLEY: No horses have been purchased at Preston this year.

Army Recruits—Age Regulations.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what is the age fixed in the Army Regulations under which recruits cannot be enlisted, or, if enlisted on false representations made by them as to their age, their parents or guardians can, under these Regulations, claim their discharge.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member will find the information required by the first part of the Question in Appendix II of the Recruiting Regulations, and that required by the second part in paragraph 1,805, Sub-section vi, of the King's Regulations.

Highland Regiments and the Kilt.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided that the kilt is no longer to form part of the fighting kit of Highland regiments, and that it is to be replaced by trews.

The following Questions also appeared on the Paper—

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Highland regiments in South Africa are to be prohibited wearing the kilt, and if so, will he state who is responsible for this Regulation; is he aware that medical authorities state that the Highlanders have enjoyed greater immunity from stomach troubles than other troops owing to the thickness of cloth protecting the abdomen; and whether, in view of the dissatisfaction which will be caused among Highland regiments, and

the consequent loss of recruits, will the order be rescinded, or not enforced until the opinion of Highlanders, who have personal experience of the many advantages of the kilt, has been obtained.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether orders have been issued by Lord Kitchener or the War Office that the Highland regiments in South Africa are no longer to wear the kilt; if so, what is the reason for its abolition; and what, in future, will be the distinguishing dress characteristic of these regiments.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is intended to abolish the wearing of the kilt by the Highland regiments; and if so, if he has considered the probable effect of this Regulation upon the recruiting for these regiments.

MR. BRODRICK: The Highland regiments will retain the kilt for full dress, and instructions will be issued for providing a kilt of khaki, or some invisible colour, on active service, as is now done in South Africa.

MR. WEIR: Who is responsible for the Regulations, and will the order be rescinded, or not enforced until the opinion of Highlanders, who have personal experience of the many advantages of the kilt, including the greater immunity from stomachic troubles which the kilt gives, has been obtained? Does the gentleman who made the Regulation know anything about the Highlanders?

MR. BRODRICK: I am not sufficiently acquainted with the subject to be able to say anything about abdominal troubles. The Regulations are made for the whole Army, but there are exceptions in the case of Highlanders.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: Is it the intention of the War Office that the distinctive tartans of the kilt are to be abolished in the Highland regiments, and is this action being taken by the War Office in revenge for Bannockburn?

MR. BRODRICK: Of course the distinctive tartan of the Highland regiments will be preserved.

Navy—Submarine Boats.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the recent trials of the submarine boats built for His Majesty's Navy have satisfied the Admiralty of the utility of these vessels for purposes of naval warfare; and whether it is proposed to build the other submarine boats provided for in the Estimates on the same pattern.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The trials of the submarine boats now under construction at Barrow are not yet completed, and more extended trials will be required before the exact limitations of the use of these boats can be determined. Provision is made in the Estimates for the current year for the building of additional boats, with such modifications and improvements as experience may suggest.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it was by the permission or authority of the First Lord of the Admiralty that photographs of the submarine boats just completed for His Majesty's Navy recently appeared in an illustrated paper; and, if so, why was the paper in question selected as the recipient of this favour.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: An application was received on behalf of an illustrated paper for permission to produce a photograph of a submarine boat, and this permission was granted. The paper was not "selected" by the Admiralty. I may add that the photograph actually reproduced was already in the possession of the paper referred to, and was not supplied by or with the permission of the Admiralty. It appears to represent the boat on the occasion of the launch.

Patent Fuel for the Navy.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a statement made recently by a naval officer of high rank to the effect that our depôts abroad were unprovided with patent fuel; and if he can state the quantities of patent fuel made

of high-class Cardiff coal which have been manufactured on account of, or purchased by, the Admiralty during the last three years for shipment to the Mediterranean and more distant depôts.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The question of supplying a good quality of patent fuel for use in the Navy was examined by an Admiralty Committee in 1898, and, in accordance with the Report of that Committee, and as the result of exhaustive trials, orders were given, in 1900, for the manufacture of patent fuel of the selected type. Since that date additional orders have been given, and the fuel has been distributed in required quantities to various depôts abroad.

Coal for the Navy.

MR. DAVID THOMAS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any experiments have recently been made of Scotch coal for steaming purposes, either in the Mediterranean or elsewhere by the Admiralty; and, if so, whether he can state generally the results as compared with those given by Welsh coal; and will the reports furnished the Admiralty be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A number of experiments have been made with Scotch coal for steaming purposes, and though some of the coals supplied have valuable qualities, the Reports do not lead to the conclusion that they are as satisfactory for naval purposes as the Welsh coal. It is not proposed to lay the Reports furnished to the Admiralty on the Table.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: May I ask whether the Admiralty have tried anthracite in combination with Scotch coal in their experiments?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, I think it has been tried in several combinations. If the hon. Gentleman will give me notice of the question I will endeavour to ascertain.

Expedition against the Mahsuds.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state what was the total number of the forces of the Indian Army recently employed in the recent Military expedition against the Mahsuds; and will he give separately the number of battalions of infantry, regiments of cavalry, mountain batteries' and Maxim guns, and of the field hospitals, and of commissariat and transport camels and bullocks employed; and will he state how long the operations lasted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am unable to give all the details asked for by the hon. Member, but I will enquire.

Greenwich Union Workhouse.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the number of inmates in the Greenwich Union Workhouse is below the number for which the building is licensed; and that this number includes eighty-four children who are to be removed to better homes; and whether he is prepared to still refuse the request of the Guardians that he should receive a deputation, with a view to pointing out how unnecessary is the new Grove Park Workhouse, which will, if completed and furnished, cost the ratepayers of Deptford and Greenwich nearly £250,000.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): According to the last Return, viz., for the week ended 29th March last, the number of inmates in this workhouse was still in excess of the number for which the building is certified. I am aware that there were about eighty children among the inmates, but of these forty-four were infants under three years of age, who could not be dealt with by the Guardians otherwise than in the workhouse. I understand, however, that representatives of the Workhouse and Infirmary Committees of the Guardians are to be appointed for the purpose of reporting on the whole question. I have been in correspondence with my noble friend the Member for Greenwich as to my receiving a deputa-

tion, and after the receipt of the Report referred to I will, if necessary, communicate with him further on the subject.

Higher Education in London Board Schools.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Burghley Road and Monnow Road Schools, under the control of the London School Board, were sanctioned by the Board of Education (subject to the observance of certain conditions) as higher elementary schools, and that the London School Board then withdrew its application on behalf of these schools; whether reasons for the withdrawal were given to the Board of Education, and, if so, can he state what they were.

THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) (for Sir J. Gorst): Yes; the London School Board were unwilling to comply with the requirements of the Higher Elementary Schools Minute.

Poor Law School Teachers.

MR. ERNEST GRAY: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, having regard to the fact that prior to the issue of the Code of 1901 it was possible for a teacher to obtain a parchment certificate by service in a Poor Law School, and that such service is no longer accepted, whether he is prepared to amend Article 63 of the Day School Code, or recommend an alteration of the Superannuation Rules, so that Guardians of the Poor may be able to secure for their schools the services of teachers who, after leaving a training college, are required to pass a period of probation in order to obtain a certificate.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: Service in a Poor Law School is now accepted under Article 63 of the Code of 1901, and this Article will be included in an even clearer form in the Code of 1902.

Post Office Expenditure on Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will state what total sum has been expended by the Post Office in connection with wireless telegraphy, whether for purchases, for experiments, and for payments to individuals; and under what Votes this sum has been presented, or will be presented, to Parliament.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Experiments in connection with wireless telegraphy have extended over a number of years, and the Postmaster General fears that it would not be possible for him to furnish the information desired by the hon. Member without considerable expense, which would scarcely be justified by the results. Such expenditure as has been incurred has been charged partly to the Vote for the Board of Trade and partly to the Post Office Vote for Telegraphs.

Hospitals in the Highlands.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the difficulty experienced in securing suitable hospital accommodation in the poorer districts of the highlands and islands of Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland will consider the expediency of introducing legislation such as will provide for the establishment and maintenance of hospitals in congested areas.

* THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am sorry I am not yet able to add anything to what I told the hon. Member on the 15th March, 1901.†

Ballyshannon Petty Sessions—District Inspector O'Connor, R.I.C.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state the result of the inquiry instituted into the conduct of District Inspector O'Connor, Royal Irish Constabulary, on the representation made by the magistrates of the Ballyshannon Petty Sessions Bench, who are constant in their attendance at these Petty Sessions, with reference to the refusal of District

† See (4) *Debates*, XCI., 86.

Inspector O'Connor to carry out the order of the magistrates to remove constables whom he had placed at the entrance of the magistrates' room in the court house, and to obey other directions of the court.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Some of the magistrates attending Petty Sessions objected to the presence of a constable placed outside the door of their room whilst the court was sitting. Other magistrates, and apparently a majority of those residing in the district, have expressed full approval of the arrangement. Should, however, a majority of those attending the Petty Sessions desire the constable to be withdrawn at any time, the District Inspector will be happy to comply with their wishes.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: That is fair.

Prisoners under Crimes Act (Ireland).

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the hon. Member for South Mayo and Mr. Denis Johnston, who are at present confined in Tullamore Prison, under Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act sentences of four and five months respectively, are obliged to exercise in the ring with ordinary prisoners; and whether he will consider the advisability of relaxing the prison rules so as to permit Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Johnston to take exercise apart from the common prisoners.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have called for a report on the facts, but have not yet received it. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat the question on Monday.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): Is it intended to continue to treat these gentlemen as common criminals, in view of the judgment recently delivered by the Lord Chief Baron?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not prepared to debate this matter by Question and answer. When I have the report on the facts, I will then answer.

Tallow Police Arrangements.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to reduce the number of extra police stationed at Tallow, County Waterford; whether any person at Tallow is under special police protection; and, if so, can he state for what reason.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is not at present proposed to relax the police arrangements at Tallow. The extra force was sent there to afford protection to persons who were subjected to intimidation.

Limerick Postal Staff Grievances.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the extra attendance of the officers at the Limerick Post Office in the case brought under his notice was necessary, owing to the increased clerical labour entailed by the Jubilee concessions, and the introduction of the amalgamated system. Whether it is usual to accept the services of officers gratuitously, and whether he is aware that a claim for overtime was previously lodged by one of the men; whether, seeing that necessary services were rendered, he will now undertake to make further inquiries with a view to having the claim allowed. And, having regard to the fact that provision was made in the recent revision for one chief clerk, two superintendents, one clerk, and four sorting clerks and telegraphists in the postmaster's enquiry office, will he state whether their absence from their different departments is provided for; and is he aware that previous to the 11th March dual officers had ceased to be employed in the telegraph office.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General is not aware that the extra attendance of the officers referred to at Limerick was due to the cause stated, or that any claim for overtime has been made by one of those officers. Any such claim, if made, will receive due consideration. In the event of any of the officers mentioned in the last paragraph being temporarily absent from the office, the usual provision would be made for their duties. As regards his inquiry

respecting "dual officers," the hon. Member is referred to the reply given to him on the subject on the 24th ultimo.†

Cable Communication with Tory Island.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the cable communicaion between Tory Island and the Donegal mainland has for some months past been interrupted through the cable having been broken; and whether, as these islanders are engaged solely in the fishing industry, and as their season for fishing begins in May, steps will be immediately taken to have the cable repaired and communication restored.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General is aware that cable communication between Tory Island and the Donegal mainland is interrupted. The cable is not, however, the property of the Postmaster General but of Lloyd's.

HOME INDUSTRIES BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday next read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Leave given to present another Bill instead thereof.—(*Colonel Denny.*)

HOME INDUSTRIES (No. 2) BILL.

"For the better regulation of Home Industries," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 147.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including agriculture and fishing), shipping, and manufactures — Mr. Jeffreys; and had appointed, in substitution, Mr. Talbot.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Shop Clubs Bill:—Mr. Banbury, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Hunter Craig, Sir Charles Dilke, Major Evans-Gordon, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Holland, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Harry Samuel, Mr. George White, Mr. J. W. Wilson, Mr. Wylie, and Mr. Yoxall.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Licensing Bill:—Mr. Bailey, Mr. Bond, Sir Harry Bullard, Mr. Caine, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Harwood, Major Jameson, Mr. Nussey, Mr. Remnant, Mr. White Ridley, Mr. Secretary Ritchie, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Tritton, and Mr. Whittaker.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

HIGHWAYS BILL.

"To amend the Law for the administration of Highways," presented by Mr. Bill, under Standing Order 31; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 148.]

UNDER SHERIFFS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To regulate the appointment, duties, and remuneration of Under Sheriffs in Ireland," presented by Mr. John Gordon, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Field, and Sir John Colomb; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 149.]

NEW PROCEDURE RULES.

[NINTH DAY'S DEBATE.]

NEW STANDING ORDER.

PRIORITY OF BUSINESS.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on proposed New Standing Order (Priority of Business) as amended [10th April].

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

† See preceding Volume, p. 840.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'That unless the House otherwise direct—

(*a*) Government Business shall have precedence at every Sitting except the Evening Sittings on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the Sitting on Friday;

(*b*) At the Evening Sittings of Tuesday and Wednesday Notices of Motion and Public Bills, other than Government Bills, shall have precedence of Government Business;

(*c*) After Easter Government Business shall have precedence at the Evening Sittings of Tuesday;

(*d*) After Whitsuntide, until Michaelmas, Government Business shall have precedence at all Evening Sittings, and at all Friday Sittings except the Sitting on the' be there inserted."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

(4.5.) SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) moved to leave out the words "and fourth" and to insert instead the words "fourth and fifth." The effect would, he said, be to give one more day to private Members. It was but a small concession he was asking for, as in practice the Government now gave three Wednesdays, and he now invited them to give the equivalent of three Fridays. He asked this because otherwise private Members would have very little chance of passing slightly contentious Bills through the House. Three separate days were usually required, but under the Government proposal only two would be available, and if there were a small and well-organised body in the House determined to oppose a measure, however acceptable it might be to Parliament generally, they could succeed in defeating it even if the Government were anxious to help it forward. There was another objection to the limit of two Wednesdays. It was quite true that in the past the Government, when asking for the whole of the time of the House, had been ready to make concessions and to give the third Wednesday; but if this hard and fast rule were laid down, they would not be willing to do so in the future. Members were now able to put pressure on the Government when they were anxious to take the whole of the time of the House, and the result was that many a Bill got through which otherwise would be blocked. The right hon. Members for North East Manchester and Sleaford apparently objected to legislation by private Members, but the great majority of the Members of the House did not take that view. The right hon. Member for Sleaford had pointed out that, unless more time was reserved to private Members, the agricultural interest would be neglected. Undoubtedly, since the last General Election, little opportunity had been afforded of debating agricultural questions. The hon. Member for Finsbury, replying to that, said he was glad if that was the case, for agriculture had had more attention paid to it of late years than it deserved. Were hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were always declaring that they were the friends of the agricultural interest, prepared now to sacrifice that interest? If not, then he appealed to them to support this Amendment. Agricultural Members were well aware that the agricultural interest, at the present moment, was feeling strongly on the question of milk-blended butter. A Bill might be brought in by a non-official question to deal with the subject, and it would practically be an uncontentious measure, but the hon. Member for Finsbury, who objected to all agricultural measures, might, with some few of his friends, make it absolutely impossible to get the Bill through, and his Amendment was intended to meet cases such as that. There was, too, the social question, which had been raised by the hon. Member for East Somerset. There was a Bill now before the House affecting the great friendly societies of the country—promoted by the hon. Member for Stepney. That Bill had the general assent of the House, and had been referred to a Grand Committee, but what would be its fate if it came back to the House under the proposed Rule of the right hon. Gentleman? The right hon Gentleman the Member for Bordesley had threatened to move a number of Amendments, and one day might not be sufficient for the Report stage, and in that event the Bill would be killed. On behalf of the members of friendly societies he appealed to the House to accept his

Amendment, and thus give that particular Bill a chance. This was a question they ought to look at entirely from the point of view of the unofficial Member, because undoubtedly both front Benches dealt with it in a very half-hearted way. He had noticed that throughout these debates the Opposition Whips had only issued *three line* Whips, thereby practically telling hon. Members it did not matter whether or not they came down to the House. The general attitude of the Front Bench, mind, was to treat private Members as a general nuisance. They seemed to think that only the legislation which they themselves proposed was necessary or desirable. He therefore suggested that Members below the gangway on both sides should unite against those on the front Benches, so as to make it impossible either for the present or future Governments to prevent unofficial Members from carrying Bills of their own, however unpretentious.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 11, to leave out the words 'and fourth,' and insert the words 'fourth and fifth.'" (*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Question proposed "That the words 'and fourth' stand part of the Question."

(4.15.) MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said he would urge the Government to make the little concession embodied in the Amendment. He admitted that under the proposals of the Government more time might be given to private Members' Bills than had been the practice in many sessions in the past; but hon. Members ought not to be expected to part with the whole of their time for Ministerial purposes, they should have some reasonable opportunity afforded them of passing their Bills into law. The House ought not to be reduced as far as their Bills are concerned to the level of a mere debating society.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said that no doubt it would be very difficult for private Members' Bills which had got through the Second Reading and Committee stages to become law if the Rule were passed in its present form, but he did not think that the Amendment provided the best solution. One extra Wednesday or Friday would not be of much value. Members who had a special object in so acting could easily spread their opposition over three instead of over two Wednesdays. He would suggest that the difficulty might be got over by giving the Bills of private Members which obtained a Second Reading before Easter priority between Easter and Whitsuntide over Bills less advanced. That would give them a chance of passing into law. There was an old saw "Don't bite off more than you can chew," and it did seem to him that in using every Wednesday up to Whitsuntide for Second Readings they were biting a good deal more off than they had a chance of being able to chew. He humbly suggested to the Government that they might make this concession to private Members.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) hoped that the Government would give favourable consideration to this Amendment. When Governments had proposed to take the whole time of the House, they had not always been animated by the same guiding principle. He would like to point out the divergence of view in the present Government from that of its predecessor. In 1888, when the late Mr. W. H. Smith made a proposal to the House, by which the time allotted to private Members' Bills was affected, he said his object was to give Members, who had obtained assent to the principle of their Bills, opportunity for proceeding with them. Mr. Smith considered this a question for the House to decide, apart from Party majority. It was evident from what he said on that occasion, that Mr. Smith attached considerable importance to legislation proposed by private Members. On the other hand, the present Leader of the House wished to curtail the opportunities for passing such legislation. The present proposal to add a fifth Friday after Whitsuntide was a moderate one, and if the Government allowed a free decision, he felt confident that this and many other Amendments on the Paper would be carried.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.) thought that a strong case had been made for the Amendment, and suggested that much stronger illustrations might have been

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said that for that very reason it was not the kind of measure they were thinking of in proposing three Fridays.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very likely not.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked if anyone imagined that a Bill of such a controversial character as the repeal of the Crimes Act could be carried on a Friday afternoon. The House of Commons had got into an unfortunate legislative habit of dealing with every question in the most piecemeal fashion. He would call, in support of that statement, the testimony of the Home Secretary. Last year the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Factories Bill, a beneficent measure, which he successfully piloted through the House. He was not going to reveal any secrets as to what occurred between the right hon. Gentleman and himself, but between them they managed to get the dockers into that Bill. The docker was within the existing Acts on one side of a vessel, and outside them on the other; one half of his body was within and the other half outside the law. That was one of those preposterous, piecemeal, tinkering Bills which the House constantly indulged in, and the only way of repairing small defects was either through the countenance and support of a sympathetic Minister like the Home Secretary, or by a private Member's Bill. Seamen were still outside the Compensation Acts, and no Government would take the question up. A private Member would have to take it up, and it was just the kind of question which a private Member could carry better than any Government. That was the kind of legislation which the right hon. Gentleman was now trying to destroy. He joined with other hon. Members in admiration of the extremely interesting speech which had been delivered by the First Lord of the Treasury. That speech was more than interesting; it was historic. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman in the matter, because it was one of those Parliamentary accidents which would occur, but that speech should have been delivered last night, and it would have been more appropriate on the preceding Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman said that there were 960 hours in a Parliamentary session of 120 days, and then, by a series of calculations, the accuracy of which he had no means of testing, but which he was quite willing to accept, the right hon. Gentleman arrived at the conclusion that only 276 hours remained for the legislative business of the Government — 276 hours for the government of one-fifth of the human race! If he had the advantage of being the proprietor of a great daily paper, he would tomorrow put the right hon. Gentleman's speech on one side of a large column in letters of gold—if the resources of the establishment permitted—and on the other side he would put the following:—

"The English"

—those were the only words not contained in the original text—

"are the greatest people the world has ever seen, but whose fault is that they do not know their strength, their greatness, and their destiny, and who are wasting their time on their minor local matters. . . . The American has been taught the lesson of home rule and the success of leaving the management of the local pump to the parish beadle."

The right hon. Gentleman would recognise the quotation.

"He does not burden his House of Commons with the responsibility of cleansing the parish drains. The present position in the English House is ridiculous. You might as well expect Napoleon to have found time to have personally counted his dirty linen before he sent it to the wash and re-counted it upon its return."†

When the right hon. Gentleman paid his well-deserved tribute to the great Englishman whose obsequies were celebrated yesterday in so touching a fashion in so many different parts of the world, he hoped he took to heart the great lesson which the last words of that great man taught, and to which the speech of the right hon. Gentleman tonight was a most eloquent and convincing epilogue.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR pointed out that the Amendment under discussion had occupied a considerable number of hours on the previous evening. He therefore appealed to the House to bring the debate to a speedy conclusion.

† The quotation is from certain notes published in the *Review of Reviews* for April, 1902, and described by the Editor as "The Political Will and Testament" of Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) thought that the speech that the right hon. Gentleman had made on this Amendment required some elucidation. The right hon. Gentleman had no doubt a strong case for showing that this Rule, if passed, would make very little difference to private Members' Bills, but the suggestion of the hon. Member for Partick was that Standing Order 12—the Whitsuntide Order assigning precedence to the Committee Stages of Bills on two Wednesdays after — should be ante-dated to Easter, so that private Members' Bills which had been fortunate enough to obtain a Second Reading early in the session should really have a chance of passing through their further stages in the course of the session by having those days between Easter and Whitsuntide which were now allotted to Second Readings of private Members' Bills allotted to them. He hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would indicate whether he was favourably disposed to the solution of the difficulty of private Members which was suggested by the hon. Member for Partick. If the right hon. Gentleman were favourably disposed, he would not carry the discussion further. The suggestion of the hon. Member for Partick was a practical one. There were, in that case, two further questions he would like to put to the right hon. Gentleman. First of all, would he consent to the appointment of a Committee to consider this particular point, the alteration of the present Rule, and, next, would he take steps as to the ballot with regard to Bills, in the sense which had so frequently been suggested by the right hon. Member for Aberdeen and other Members in the past? The right hon. Gentleman would do himself great credit and facilitate the passing of the Rules if he were to indicate his general approval of the scheme in some form or other of this particular solution of this question so that it might be placed upon the Paper and become a Standing Order this session. If that were done, it should be possible to place important private Members' Bills in such a position in the early part of the session as to give them a real chance of becoming law.

(5.55.) MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he had a very strong feeling against all encroachments of private Members' rights. The House of Commons was becoming more and more an official Registry. He remembered when the Home Rule Bill was under discussion, Mr. Courtney moved an Amendment; he wished to have a Resolution passed whereby a Cabinet Minister in one House should have a right of audience in the other, but Mr. Gladstone rose up and with some heat said that for fifty-two years he had been a Member of Parliament, and he would never sit in a House of Commons in which the smallest privilege was given to a Member by reason of his being a Minister of the Crown.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman must make his remarks relevant to the question before the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he only wished to show that every encroachment on private Members' rights gave further power to official Members on one side or the other. The argument of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment was that if this extra day were not given, no private Bill of a contentious nature had the least chance of passing. Everybody knew that there were private Bills which, though not controversial in their nature, were highly contentious, and which no Government desired to take up. For instance, there was the great class of Criminal Law Amendment Bills brought in by Sir Samuel Romilly, all of which were brought in as private Members' Bills. On the ground that if he went into the Government at all the question would become a Party question, Sir Samuel Romilly refused the Solicitor Generalship, and actually got an independent seat in order to give expression to his views. All philanthropy of that kind, by a man who wished to hold himself independent of Party, would be utterly destroyed by this Rule. But there was a more recent illustration——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is going into some interesting historical reminiscences, but at the same time, I must remind him that they have nothing to do with the question before the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he dared not make a compromise with Mr. Speaker, but would he state at what time or stage it would be in order for him (the hon. Member) briefly to show the benefits that had come from private Members' Bills; and the way in which these Rules would affect that question?

*MR. SPEAKER said that he could not lay that down beforehand. If the remarks of the hon. Member were irrelevant he would be interrupted; he would then, exhaustively, find out whether he was in order.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would not venture to transgress the Rules of the House in order to find out when, by accident, he might be in the right.

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not suggest that the hon. Member would wilfully transgress.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would endeavour, by some species of ingenuity, when the Rule as amended was put from the Chair, to bring forward the point he desired to lay before the House. The First Lord had throughout gone on the assumption that he was taking care of the interests of the House as a whole. If that was so, why did he not divest the proposals of their Party character, and allow Members to vote according to their independent views? As long as the Government Whips were put at the doors each, Motion became a vote of confidence, and Members were obliged to vote according to Party. That was not the way to pass Rules which were supposed to be for the regulation of the House as a whole. Probably hon. Members were better judges of their own House than the First Lord himself——

(6.6.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 196: Noes, 136. (Division List No. 100.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fd. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. C. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hon. William Ed. H.
Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. H L.B (Cambs.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Mildway, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Bryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock).
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Whitmore Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walmond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austen, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, R. C. Munro (Leith
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herb't Jn.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D'vid Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Louth, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Randall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Lough, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary M.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Robert, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheelan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.

Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

(6.18.) Question put accordingly, "That the words 'and fourth' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 199; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 101.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Devonshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Laurence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hn. Jas. (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mildway, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'ths.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwick)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark T. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin

Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffi'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, Jno. Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunt'n
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Dougan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Jno.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gordon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Dav. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. T. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Jno. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Warner.

Amendment proposed—

"After line 11, to add the words—'(e) At the Evening Sittings at which Government Business has not precedence Notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the Day.'" (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words—'(f) At all Afternoon Sittings the House will first proceed with Petitions, Motions for Unopposed Returns, and Leave of Absence to Members, giving Notices of Motions, and Unopposed Private Business.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

(6.35.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), in moving the next Amendment, said it would be observed that the proposed Standing Order began with the words—

and insert, after "Sittings," the words:

"and that all Friday Sittings, except the sittings on the first six Fridays after Whitsuntide."

The right hon. Gentleman had described what would happen under the Bill by the figures he had submitted to the House, and he made out that private Members would have fourteen Fridays in the future. He thought in making this statement his right hon. friend forgot to consider that private Bill legislation would be relegated to private Members' nights.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to be able to satisfy the House upon that point when we come to that Rule.

*MR. CHAPLIN said he should be delighted if that were the case, but as the Rule stood, there was no doubt that the private Members' Fridays, under the Rules as they stood at present, would be seriously eaten into by the time which would be occupied by what is known as private Bill Legislation. If his right hon. friend was going to make some other arrangement for private Bill legislation, that would, of course, alter the position. There was, however, another side to the picture, and he was perfectly right in what he stated the previous night, for this system of taking private Members' Fridays was an entire innovation. In the year 1891, under the Rule of their late lamented friend, Mr. W. H. Smith, private Members' Wednesdays were not taken until the 15th of June; in 1890 they were taken on the 17th of June; in 1889, on the 17th of July; and in the year 1888, not until the 11th of July. Now the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take Fridays after Whitsuntide, which this year fell upon the 18th of May. His right hon. friend seemed to think that he regarded this question of the rights of private Members solely from the point of view of one particular Bill, but in that he was entirely mistaken. He stated himself the other night that there were bad Bills introduced by private Members, and that there were also a number of very good and useful Bills introduced by private Members, and he cited, as an illustration, the Children's Bill, and the Beer Bill which was introduced last Session.

Mr. Chaplin.

One of his late colleagues said that the greatest danger they had, in his opinion, would arise from private Members' Bills supposing the Conservative Party were in opposition. He believed that was an entirely erroneous notion. The real danger they had to provide against in future was from a Government which might be composed of men of extreme opinions, and with the uncontrolled power they would have over the proceedings and the whole time of the House. That was the danger which they were laying up for themselves, and it might be perhaps not so distant as a good many of his hon. friends, in the pride of their present majority, believed.

He was rather amused last night by the lecture addressed to him by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North-East Manchester upon his attitude towards the Government since he had ceased to be one of them. The right hon. Baronet had been kind enough to write to him a letter couched in terms of kindly and almost fatherly remonstrance, but it might surprise him to learn that, not only personally but politically, upon all questions except in these Rules of Procedure his relations with his former colleagues since, to his regret, he parted from them had been universally of the most friendly character. Last night he asked the right hon. Gentleman to cite a single instance upon which he had been in opposition to the Government, and had tried to defeat their proposals, except upon these new Standing Orders. He had made some reference, and he had not been able to produce a single case. His right hon. friend had stated in his letter that it was his manner, and the whole tone of his speeches, that appeared to give the impression that he was acting in an organised attempt to defeat the Government in these proposals, and that he was far indeed from being dispassionate. Well, he did not pretend that his manner could ascend to the level of the right hon. Gentleman's. But that was his misfortune, not his fault. While the right hon. Gentleman was lecturing him last night he was irresistibly reminded of an occasion in this House when Mr. Horsman, who at that time was a very prominent figure, lectured

Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Disraeli rose and replied that both sides of the House acknowledged that the hon. Gentleman was "a superior person." He did not think he could do better than pass on the compliment to his right hon. friend. But even from the pedestal of his admitted superiority, he was not warranted with great respect, in imputing blame to him, either for his action or his motives, in the Debates on the Procedure. He need not, perhaps, have noticed the attack of his right hon. friend, but it would have been discourteous to ignore it, and what he said tonight would save the necessity of any further reply to the letter of his right hon. friend.

This curtailment of the rights and privileges of private Members was greatly to be regretted in the interest of the House of Commons on totally different grounds. Even Prime Ministers and Leaders of the House of Commons had begun by being private Members themselves, and if the rights and privileges of private Members were to be curtailed in the manner that is now proposed, what opportunities would be left to young Members for political and Parliamentary training? It was his fortune to come into Parliament under the great Leaders of former days. There was nothing more remarkable, either in Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone, than the never-failing interest they took in any young Member of this House who showed ordinary aptitude, and the encouragement they gave to him to persevere in his Parliamentary work, and to induce him to take as prominent a position as he could. But how completely changed was all this. His opinion was that there never was a time since he had been in the House of Commons when there was so much political ability among the younger Members on the Conservative side of the House than at present. He spoke of this side because he knew more of it than of the other. What opportunities did they get commensurate with their deserts for taking part in the proceedings of the House? Why was it they had not opportunities? It was all due to the system of obstruction, which the Rules of the Leader of the House were avowedly not brought forward for the purpose of stopping. The Whips went round making entreaties to Member after Member on this side of the House not to speak.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the only Question before the House is whether there shall be two or three Fridays after Whitsunday when Government business shall not have precedence.

*MR. CHAPLIN said he always bowed to the ruling of the Speaker. He was supporting an Amendment which was intended to strengthen and improve the position of private Members. He was endeavouring to show how unfortunate was the position of private Members at the present time, and in support of that he made the statement that it was impossible for them now to take part often in the proceedings of the House because of the obstruction which prevailed, and which these Rules would not prevent.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As a matter of personal explanation. My right hon. friend has made an attack upon me for discouraging rising talent, I suppose on both sides of the House, and certainly on this side. I never remember a case in which any gentleman came to Parliamentary eminence through bringing in Bills on a Wednesday. The truth is that these are not the opportunities by which a Member of this House has ever risen to the summit of his Parliamentary ambition.

(5.13.) MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said that nothing that had occurred during the whole of these debates so directed attention to the difficulties of their position as the very interesting and lucid statement which the Leader of the House had rendered this afternoon with regard to the time occupied by private Members and by Government measures. No doubt it was a great revelation to many hon. Members of the House, and he could not help thinking that even at this late hour the Leader of the House must see how wise it would be even now to throw the whole of these Rules overboard and appoint a competent Committee to suggest some system for the re-organisation of the sittings of the House and the

season of their meeting. The Amendment now proposed was exceedingly moderate, and he sincerely trusted that the House, taking an independent judgment upon it, would carry it.

*MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said the First Lord of the Treasury must have observed that many Members of the House on the Government side viewed these Rules with somewhat lukewarm enthusiasm. The right hon. Gentleman must be cheered by the fact that very often the objections raised to them were mutually destructive. He, for one, welcomed that callousness to the demands for the further worsening of this Rule, as he regarded it. Every hon. Member had got his own view as to the importance of the Resolution which he wished to bring before the House, or he thought that the Bill which he wished to pass was the most excellent in the world. But what the House had got to consider was whether, when private Members introduced on Fridays Bills of a revolutionary nature without proper consideration, they ought to facilitate their passage into law. He held that they ought not, and, therefore, he advocated that the fewer days devoted to that purpose the better. To increase the two days for private Members' business to three would only produce a scandalous state of things, and increase the obstruction to the proposed measures or Resolutions. He did not say that that obstruction would be wrong. Probably he would conceive it to be right, and would take part in it. He thought it would be a far less evil to stop the passage of a Bill by even unnecessary conversation than allowing it to pass into law without proper consideration. He did not think the proposed Rules would stifle rising talent. It was entirely beyond the power of the First Lord to effect that. He joined the hon. Member who had just spoken in congratulating the First Lord on the extremely interesting speech he had made, and in giving the Leader of the Opposition an opportunity of poaching on the manor of the hon. Member for Waterford and dragging in the question of Home Rule.

(5.20.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeenshire, S.) said that the First Lord of the Treasury had admitted that the position of private Members' business was very unsatisfactory. Why should the time of the House be taken up in discussing private Members' Bills which could not pass, and in which few Members took a real interest? This was one of the evils which ought to be inquired into and dealt with. The second difficulty was, supposing twelve private Members' Bills had been carried to a second reading, but that only two or three of these had any chance of passing into law; assuming that all those Bills went to a Grand Committee, and were carefully considered and brought into shape, the process of obstruction might be brought to bear on the first, and the remaining eleven would have no chance of passing at all. That was a waste of the time of the House which did no credit to the practical sanity of the House. The moral which they ought to draw from the First Lord's interesting classification of private Members' Bills was that there was only a limited time to consider these, and that the House ought to economise that time; in fact, that unless they employed private Members' time more usefully it was wasted. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to promise the House an inquiry, either by the Cabinet or by a Committee of the House, as to how the leakage of the time of this Chamber could be avoided. There was another grievance. Year after year the same Bills were brought forward and the same discussion took place upon them, but those Bills never got any more forward. He took, as an illustration, the Rating of Machinery Bill, which had been before the House for twenty years, and on which a great number of Wednesdays had been wasted. That Bill ought to be dealt with once for all. There was another instance—the Registration of Firms Bill, which had been discussed over and over again, and the Second Reading carried by large majorities. Here there was a limited amount of time for private Members' business, which the right hon. Gentleman had shown the House was needed for so many purposes, but which was squandered. He hoped the First Lord would take this subject

into his serious consideration and institute some inquiry in regard to it, with the view of the allotment of private Members' time on a more business-like footing.

(5.25.) MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said that many hon. Members had spoken as if for the first time private Members were called upon to give up their opportunities for carrying legislation. He ventured to say that in all his earlier years in Parliament the opportunities afforded to private Members were mainly with the view of bringing forward Motions for ventilating their grievances. These took up eight hours each on Tuesdays and Fridays, while five or five and a half hours on Wednesdays were devoted to unofficial Members' legislation. He had never disguised his feeling that private Members' time should be devoted to ventilating grievances rather than to passing measures, many of which were bad. He maintained that unofficial Members should stand by their rights and privileges to call attention to grievances, and to raise questions of general interest. Private Members should insist on a legitimate opportunity being given to them to bring forward important questions and not concentrate their attention on Bills.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he intended to vote for the Amendment on pretty much the same grounds that he had ventured to urge to the House with reference to another Amendment yesterday. At the same time, he confessed he preferred yesterday's Amendment, because, although it only left two Fridays after Whitsuntide, it still preserved liberty of action on the part of the House, and gave the House the power to meet anything like flagrant obstruction by giving another day to a measure which had received the sanction of the overwhelming majority of the House. But, as he had said last night, half a loaf was better than no bread. He did not think the hon. Member for the St. Albans Division was quite correct in saying that, so far as obstruction was concerned, three Fridays would be just the same as two. He thought if the House saw that there was a deliberate campaign of obstruction against a particular measure which was backed by the general feeling of the House, that some means would be devised whereby a third Friday should be used for the passage of the Bill. Therefore he thought there was a very considerable difference between three Fridays and two. He entirely dissented from the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. He was disposed to accept the right hon. Gentleman's general attitude in hostility to mere fads and fancies. He was as much an anti-faddist as the right hon. Gentleman himself, but the right hon. Gentleman appeared to regard the majority of private Members' Bills as merely faddists' Bills. That was not his opinion. The faddist's Bill generally met with an early death, but the kind of private Member's Bill he wished to preserve was of a very different character. He saw on the opposite Benches an hon. friend and countryman of his own, the hon. Member for Devizes, who, in a private Bill and without any Government support, but simply by his own energy, effected a very considerable and desirable change in the social and economic condition of the agricultural labourers of the country. That was a very remarkable instance of a measure carried by a ministerialist Member by the support of the House generally. That was the kind of private Bill he wished to see preserved. He mentioned last night the changes in the social condition of married life in this country, every one of which had been carried by Bills proposed by private Members, and carried through without the support of the Government of the day. He did not think the First Lord of the Treasury was quite fair in giving the repeal of the Crimes Act as the kind of private Members' Bill of which the House was thinking. That Act was passed after many weeks of Parliamentary time, in face of a fierce and obstinate opposition, and its repeal would also demand a large proportion of Parliamentary time unless the House had arrived at an united opinion regarding it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said it would obviously be a very controversial measure.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said that for that very reason it was not the kind of measure they were thinking of in proposing three Fridays.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very likely not.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked if anyone imagined that a Bill of such a controversial character as the repeal of the Crimes Act could be carried on a Friday afternoon. The House of Commons had got into an unfortunate legislative habit of dealing with every question in the most piecemeal fashion. He would call, in support of that statement, the testimony of the Home Secretary. Last year the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Factories Bill, a beneficent measure, which he successfully piloted through the House. He was not going to reveal any secrets as to what occurred between the right hon. Gentleman and himself, but between them they managed to get the dockers into that Bill. The docker was within the existing Acts on one side of a vessel, and outside them on the other; one half of his body was within and the other half outside the law. That was one of those preposterous, piecemeal, tinkering Bills which the House constantly indulged in, and the only way of repairing small defects was either through the countenance and support of a sympathetic Minister like the Home Secretary, or by a private Member's Bill. Seamen were still outside the Compensation Acts, and no Government would take the question up. A private Member would have to take it up, and it was just the kind of question which a private Member could carry better than any Government. That was the kind of legislation which the right hon. Gentleman was now trying to destroy. He joined with other hon. Members in admiration of the extremely interesting speech which had been delivered by the First Lord of the Treasury. That speech was more than interesting; it was historic. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman in the matter, because it was one of those Parliamentary accidents which would occur, but that speech should have been delivered last night, and it would have been more appropriate on the preceding Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman said that there were 960 hours in a Parliamentary session of 120 days, and then, by a series of calculations, the accuracy of which he had no means of testing, but which he was quite willing to accept, the right hon. Gentleman arrived at the conclusion that only 276 hours remained for the legislative business of the Government — 276 hours for the government of one-fifth of the human race! If he had the advantage of being the proprietor of a great daily paper, he would tomorrow put the right hon. Gentleman's speech on one side of a large column in letters of gold—if the resources of the establishment permitted—and on the other side he would put the following:—

"The English"

—those were the only words not contained in the original text—

"are the greatest people the world has ever seen, but whose fault is that they do not know their strength, their greatness, and their destiny, and who are wasting their time on their minor local matters. . . . The American has been taught the lesson of home rule and the success of leaving the management of the local pump to the parish beadle."

The right hon. Gentleman would recognise the quotation.

"He does not burden his House of Commons with the responsibility of cleansing the parish drains. The present position in the English House is ridiculous. You might as well expect Napoleon to have found time to have personally counted his dirty linen before he sent it to the wash and re-counted it upon its return."†

When the right hon. Gentleman paid his well-deserved tribute to the great Englishman whose obsequies were celebrated yesterday in so touching a fashion in so many different parts of the world, he hoped he took to heart the great lesson which the last words of that great man taught, and to which the speech of the right hon. Gentleman tonight was a most eloquent and convincing epilogue.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR pointed out that the Amendment under discussion had occupied a considerable number of hours on the previous evening. He therefore appealed to the House to bring the debate to a speedy conclusion.

† The quotation is from certain notes published in the *Review of Reviews* for April, 1902, and described by the Editor as "The Political Will and Testament" of Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) thought that the speech that the right hon. Gentleman had made on this Amendment required some elucidation. The right hon. Gentleman had no doubt a strong case for showing that this Rule, if passed, would make very little difference to private Members' Bills, but the suggestion of the hon. Member for Partick was that Standing Order 12—the Whitsuntide Order assigning precedence to the Committee Stages of Bills on two Wednesdays after — should be ante-dated to Easter, so that private Members' Bills which had been fortunate enough to obtain a Second Reading early in the session should really have a chance of passing through their further stages in the course of the session by having those days between Easter and Whitsuntide which were now allotted to Second Readings of private Members' Bills allotted to them. He hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would indicate whether he was favourably disposed to the solution of the difficulty of private Members which was suggested by the hon. Member for Partick. If the right hon. Gentleman were favourably disposed, he would not carry the discussion further. The suggestion of the hon. Member for Partick was a practical one. There were, in that case, two further questions he would like to put to the right hon. Gentleman. First of all, would he consent to the appointment of a Committee to consider this particular point, the alteration of the present Rule, and, next, would he take steps as to the ballot with regard to Bills, in the sense which had so frequently been suggested by the right hon. Member for Aberdeen and other Members in the past? The right hon. Gentleman would do himself great credit and facilitate the passing of the Rules if he were to indicate his general approval of the scheme in some form or other of this particular solution of this question so that it might be placed upon the Paper and become a Standing Order this session. If that were done, it should be possible to place important private Members' Bills in such a position in the early part of the session as to give them a real chance of becoming law.

(5.55.) MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he had a very strong feeling against all encroachments of private Members' rights. The House of Commons was becoming more and more an official Registry. He remembered when the Home Rule Bill was under discussion, Mr. Courtney moved an Amendment; he wished to have a Resolution passed whereby a Cabinet Minister in one House should have a right of audience in the other, but Mr. Gladstone rose up and with some heat said that for fifty-two years he had been a Member of Parliament, and he would never sit in a House of Commons in which the smallest privilege was given to a Member by reason of his being a Minister of the Crown.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman must make his remarks relevant to the question before the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he only wished to show that every encroachment on private Members' rights gave further power to official Members on one side or the other. The argument of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment was that if this extra day were not given, no private Bill of a contentious nature had the least chance of passing. Everybody knew that there were private Bills which, though not controversial in their nature, were highly contentious, and which no Government desired to take up. For instance, there was the great class of Criminal Law Amendment Bills brought in by Sir Samuel Romilly, all of which were brought in as private Members' Bills. On the ground that if he went into the Government at all the question would become a Party question, Sir Samuel Romilly refused the Solicitor Generalship, and actually got an independent seat in order to give expression to his views. All philanthropy of that kind, by a man who wished to hold himself independent of Party, would be utterly destroyed by this Rule. But there was a more recent illustration——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is going into some interesting historical reminiscences, but at the same time, I must remind him that they have nothing to do with the question before the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he dared not make a compromise with Mr. Speaker, but would he state at what time or stage it would be in order for him (the hon. Member) briefly to show the benefits that had come from private Members' Bills; and the way in which these Rules would affect that question?

*MR. SPEAKER said that he could not lay that down beforehand. If the remarks of the hon. Member were irrelevant he would be interrupted; he would then, exhaustively, find out whether he was in order.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would not venture to transgress the Rules of the House in order to find out when, by accident, he might be in the right.

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not suggest that the hon. Member would wilfully transgress.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would endeavour, by some species of ingenuity, when the Rule as amended was put from the Chair, to bring forward the point he desired to lay before the House. The First Lord had throughout gone on the assumption that he was taking care of the interests of the House as a whole. If that was so, why did he not divest the proposals of their Party character, and allow Members to vote according to their independent views? As long as the Government Whips were put at the doors each, Motion became a vote of confidence, and Members were obliged to vote according to Party. That was not the way to pass Rules which were supposed to be for the regulation of the House as a whole. Probably hon. Members were better judges of their own House than the First Lord himself——

(6.6.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 196; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 100.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fd. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Forster, Henry William
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. C. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hon. William Ed. H.
Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. H L. B (Cambs.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Mildway, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Bryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock).
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Whitmore Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walmond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austen, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, R. C. Munro (Leith
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herb't Jn.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D'vid Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Louth, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Randall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Lough, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary M.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Parrington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Robert, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheelan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.

Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

(6.18.) Question put accordingly, "That the words 'and fourth' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 199; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 101.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Devonshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Laurence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hn. Jas. (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mildway, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'ths.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwick)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark T. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin

Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffi'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, Jno. Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunt'n
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Dougan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Jno.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Dav. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. T. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Jno. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Warner.

Amendment proposed—

"After line 11, to add the words—'(e) At the Evening Sittings at which Government Business has not precedence Notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the Day.'" (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words—'(f) At all Afternoon Sittings the House will first proceed with Petitions, Motions for Unopposed Returns, and Leave of Absence to Members, giving Notices of Motions, and Unopposed Private Business.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

(6.35.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), in moving the next Amendment, said it would be observed that the proposed Standing Order began with the words—

"Unless the House otherwise direct." He thought the Rule was too cast iron, but the House having made it, he wanted to take care that the Government—he did not say this Government, but some Government—should not unexpectedly move to suspend the Standing Order and sweep the whole thing away, or direct otherwise than as the Standing Order directed. He did not want a Motion to be sprung upon the House suspending the whole of the Standing Order or altering a portion of it. He was quite prepared to accept any other wording, and if there was any good reason why the addition should not be accepted, he should be glad to hear it.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last added, to add the words —'And no Motion to the effect that the House shall otherwise direct than is in this Order provided, or for the suspension of this Order, shall be moved, unless it has appeared at latest on the Notice Paper circulated two days before that to which it applies.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that he could not accept this Amendment. The hon. Member wished two days notice for any relaxation of the Rule. He did not know why there should be longer notice for the relaxation of this Rule than for suspending the twelve o'clock Rule. All Governments, he believed, endeavoured to meet the convenience of the House of Commons so far as they could.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES thought the proposal that two days notice should be given in this matter was a very moderate requirement.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he saw no reason why two days notice should be given. There might be occasions on which it would be extremely inconvenient to give two days notice. He hoped that his hon. friend would not press the Amendment.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Would one day's notice not be sufficient?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: No, Sir.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said there had been in the past great uncertainty when particular items of business would come on, and he understood that the right hon. Gentleman laid great stress on the necessity for removing that uncertainty. His hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn did not at all wish to prevent the Government from varying the Order; he merely insisted upon reasonable notice. He did not know whether his hon. friend would divide the House, but he had done a great service in calling attention to this matter.

(6.43). SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said this Rule was one which largely interfered with the rights of private Members. It was reasonable, with regard to such of those rights as were left, to ask for some security that they would not be taken away. The hon. Member for King's Lynn, modest and unassuming as he always was, merely wished reasonable notice of what the Government intended to do. He could not understand why in little things of this sort the right hon. Gentleman seemed disposed to be obdurate in a degree which was scarcely warranted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that the observation of the right hon. Gentleman was quite uncalled for, and he hoped that the discussion would not be continued much longer. He was convinced that he was appealing in this case to the general convenience of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he hoped that the hon. Member for King's Lynn would force his Motion to a division, if only for the one reason that it would teach the First Lord of the Treasury that he was the servant, and not the master, of the House. He maintained that the Notice Paper had hitherto not been considered part and parcel of Parliamentary procedure, but the effect of the Motion under discussion would be to make it so.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that if the First Lord of the Treasury would only look at this question from the private Member's point of view, he would see that there was much more in it than he apparently imagined. Suppose that he were fortunate enough to win a first place in the ballot for a

Wednesday morning sitting. Now a Member must devote a considerable amount of time to get up his subject —say the previous Monday and Tuesday —and he maintained that they ought to have reasonable warning that they need not waste their time if the Government were going to take that Wednesday.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE said that there might be an arbitrary Government in power, which might wish to prevent a discussion on some great question affecting, say, the trade of the country; and it was only reasonable that Members should have notice that the Government were going to deprive them of their day.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he supported the Amendment if for no other reason than that it would be a very good training for the Government Departments to look two days ahead, which was a faculty that seemed to be at present dormant. If they could only look two days ahead there would be a wonderful awakening and smartening of the business of the House, and he was sure that the First Lord of the Treasury would find it a very great convenience to himself and to the efficiency of the House in getting on with its business.

(7.0.) MR. LODER (Brighton) said he was not sure that it was possible for the Government to alter the Standing Order without notice. If that were so, this Amendment was not necessary, but he thought the House ought to be protected by some provision of this kind. At the same time the suggestion of the hon. Member for King's Lynn requiring two days was too much. But inasmuch as Ministers had to give notice of their intention to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule, they ought also to have to give notice with regard to this Rule.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) expressed the opinion that as private Members of the House had surrendered most of their privileges, the few remaining to them should be properly safeguarded, and that, if those few remaining privileges were to be taken away, they should only be taken away after due notice. If the first Lord of the Treasury applied the argument that notice should be given as to the work the House was to do on particular days to this case, he would find that the Amendment was a most reasonable one. But the First Lord of the Treasury had been instrumental in depriving the House of its privileges, and so far as he could see, the right hon. Gentleman had no inclination to give the House any assurance that their few remaining rights and privileges should be safeguarded and preserved.

*MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) asked whether, in the event of the Amendment not passing, the House would be entitled to the ordinary one day's notice.

*MR. SPEAKER said that would be so. Notice might be given on a Monday, and it would appear in the Paper on Tuesday morning, and the Motion made on the Tuesday.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that there was nothing in the Standing Orders which required notice to be given, and that the decisions given by Mr. Speaker with regard to notice would be based on the traditions of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER said it was the well-established immemorial practice to give notice of such Motions.

*MR. BLAKE said he assumed that it would be necessary, and in that case the House was entitled to what might be called the ordinary one day's notice. He thought it was not an unreasonable thing that there should be a somewhat longer notice. This was a part of the new scheme of the right hon. Gentleman for giving greater certainty and security to hon. Members with regard to the order of the business with which they would be called upon to deal. Such notice as this Rule gave was notice only as from the morning, and that only to those Members who received their papers at their own houses, which certainly did not leave the House much security. He recognised the view which the First Lord had rather adumbrated than stated, that there might be occasion on which so short a notice was all that could be given without great inconvenience, such as, for instance, the illness of a Minister

in charge of a measure. Under these circumstances he would suggest the Amendment to the Amendment now before the House by adding, after the words, "notice paper" the words "unless in case of sudden emergency," which would have the effect of preserving the power of the Government to act on shorter notice when it must.

(7.8.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 129; Noes, 187. (Division List No. 102).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloue., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr. M'Kenna.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord

Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dewar, T. R. (T'rH mlets, S. Geo.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donal Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

(7.25.) SIR ROBERT REID said that, as the Resolution which had now been put from the Chair would in a very short time be added to the Rules of the House, he would like to make a few observations upon it. He had taken no part at any time in the numerous wails of lamentation which had been raised, not without reason, he thought, by private Members upon the question of their time being taken away, and the position of extreme impotence to which they had been reduced; but he had watched the thing go forward, and since the time when he first entered the House great changes had taken place. Then private Members had two days a week for Motions and the whole of Wednesday, and if he was not mistaken, whenever the Government attempted to take away, even at a belated period of the session, a considerable portion of the time of the House, it always accompanied its suggestion with something like a pledge. In 1880 that tradition was strong in the House. It was not a mere ministerial chamber, as was at present the case, but it was a place in which the minority were entitled to a hearing. It was not considered then, even in the official view, that the constituencies represented by 250 Members were of no account as a legislative

body. The life and occupation in this House of private Members had been changed. In these latter days nothing could be done by them except to vote or to take part in demonstrations inside the House, or occasionally to take part in debates against the Government, because if they took part in support they were apt to suffer great discouragement. The change which was about to be made now would set the final seal of humiliation upon private Members. Certain figures had been given, extending over a number of years, showing the number of days taken by private Members and the time which had been taken by the Government. But there were certain other figures given by the right hon. Gentleman. The number of hours left to the Government, although they took—and he fully acknowledged they were bound to do so, if they meant to go on with Government business—more and more time from the private Member, was 276 hours, or about six weeks in the whole course of the session. The Government themselves had not sufficient time for debating and transacting the business of the House. They had practically extinguished the private Member, and they had now come to the point at which the iron pot, having crushed the earthen vessel, was finding itself in a similar difficulty. He would not mind the time for debate being shortened if it merely meant putting an end to useless talk and obstruction, for which he had no inclination or taste. But business was scamped, and the House was often unable to hear the valuable views of gentlemen on the other side who, from loyalty to the Government, did not take part in debates. In addition to that, many questions were not taken up in the House—questions which the Government would be wi ling to take up, which they placed year after year in the King's Speech, and, no doubt sincerely, declared to be of great importance to the vital interests of the country. Moreover, controversial Government business, as well as the private Member, was practically extinguished. It was impossible to get through the House a long measure of any kind unless it was uncontroversial, or if more than six or eight Members opposed it. The Government were obliged constantly to repeat the same proposals, with assurances of their importance, and then towards the end of the session to make the humiliating confession that they had not time to carry them into effect.

The House were now discussing a Rule, the purpose of which undoubtedly was largely to curtail the rights and opportunities of private Members. But trumpery little economies of time here and there would do nothing. The right of private Members could not be resuscitated as long as the House remained charged with all the duties it had taken upon itself. The reasoning of the First Lord had carried him a great deal farther than he wished to go. It came to this—that the House of Commons as a legislative machine, so far as private Members were concerned, had actually broken down, and that so far as Government business was concerned it had largely broken down. The more the House realised how complicated and difficult were the immense problems with which they had to deal, how much time and care they required, and how much mischief might arise from the mistakes made by the House, the more they must realise that the instrument they had to use was ineffective for the purpose. It answered the purpose of our forefathers, but it was not adequate to the needs of the present time. That state of things would not be altered by any Rules of Procedure. He was not leading up to the Irish question; the Irish question led up to itself. In regard to England, quite as much as in regard to Ireland, it was impossible, in the House of Commons alone, for Members to do anything effective to redeem the pledges made to their constituents. That tended to create a certain amount of insincerity when Members went to their constitutents, because, when they were asked about certain proposals it was very difficult to say it was impossible to carry them. Until the House recognised the difference between business which it could delegate to other quarters and business which could not be delegated and confined itself solely to the latter, it would never again become the powerful engine of the State that it used to be. That was the real moral of the figures given by the First Lord of the Treasury. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman

would be historic, because, although not designed for the purpose, it was an explicit admission on the part of the Government that the House was not competent to discharge, not merely the private business of private Members, but the public business of the Government.

(7.40.) MR. BROADHURST could not refrain from taking the opportunity to enter his protest against this new Standing Order. It marked a serious parting of the ways in Parliamentary life, freedom, and efficiency. For two months the Rules had been under discussion, and the proposal now being considered was most destructive as against the liberty of the House of Commons. The opportunities of private Members would be almost nil. The Labour Party had been endeavouring for some time to secure opportunities for bringing forward Motions connected with the Labour movement, but even with the liberties hitherto enjoyed the chances had been very few. All through the session they had been trying to bring forward Motions of the utmost importance, concerning the very existence of trade combinations, the safety of their funds, and the protection of the aged, the widows, and the orphans dependent upon those funds, but they were absolutely powerless. They were rapidly approaching the time when the "Mother of Parliaments" would be a mere machine. It was already regarded as an offence to criticise the Government.

(7.43.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 160; Noes, 104. (Division List No. 103.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cantley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplain, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dewar, T. R. (T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (W'dnesbury
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Middlemore, J'hn Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (W'lthamstow
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Oir-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)

Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Channing.

(7.53.) Main question, as amended, put accordingly.

The House divided:—Ayes, 160; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 104.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Dewar, T. R. (T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-

Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gartit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Captain Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward

Sullivan, Donal	White, Luke (York, E. R.)	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)	White, Patrick (Meath, North)	Mr. Broadhurst and Mr.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)	Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)	Charles Hobhouse.
Weir, James Galloway	Whittaker, Thomas Palmer	

The new Standing Order (Priority of Business), as finally adopted, is as follows:—

That, unless the House otherwise direct—

(*a*) *Government Business shall have precedence at every Sitting except the Evening Sittings on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the Sitting on Friday.*

(*b*) *At the Evening Sittings of Tuesday and Wednesday notices of Motion and Public Bills, other than Government Bills, shall have precedence of Government Business.*

(*c*) *After Easter Government Business shall have precedence at the Evening Sittings of Tuesday.*

(*d*) *After Whitsuntide, until Michaelmas, Government Business shall have precedence at all Evening Sittings, and at all Friday Sittings except the Sittings on the third and fourth Fridays after Whit Sunday.*

(*e*) *At the Evening Sittings at which Government Business has not precedence Notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the Day.*

(*f*) *At all Afternoon Sittings the House will first proceed with Petitions, Motions for unopposed Returns, and Leave of Absence to Members, giving Notices of Motions, and Unopposed Private Business.*"

NEW STANDING ORDER (BUSINESS IN SUPPLY).

Motion made and Question proposed,

"As soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Esimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first order of the day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the Question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

"Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any Vote of Credit, or of Votes for Supplementary or Additional Estimates presented by the Government for War Expenditure, shall not be included in the computation of the twenty days aforesaid.

"Provided also that on Motion made after Notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than business of Supply shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one Sitting to the Report of that Vote. At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the Sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith

put the Question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the Questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the Question: That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like Question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the days appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order, two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

(8.7.) MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) moved an Amendment on the first paragraph of the proposed Standing Order substituting "Monday" for "Thursday" as the day on which Supply should be taken. By putting Supply at the end of the week instead of at the beginning, the Government were contributing to the leisure of those hon. Members who were disposed to be satisfied with three days attendance in the week to their Parliamentary duties, and in fact it would lead to what people in the North of England would call Parliamentary half-timers. The examination of Supply was one of the most important duties of Parliament, and he contended that it ought not to be relegated to the end of the week in the way proposed. He should have preferred Tuesday or Wednesday for the consideration of Supply, but these days had already been allocated for other purposes, and Monday was the only other day available. He admitted that Monday was open to some extent to the same objection as Thursday, but it would have the great advantage of putting Supply in the first place at the beginning of the week, thus giving far greater importance to the work than if it was left to Thursday, which, as many hon. Members had said, would be treated as an additional half day. The First Lord of the Treasury about a year ago said that there was no longer in this House any party of economy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR indicated dissent.

MR. WHITLEY said that was his recollection. That was largely due to the way in which the Estimates had come to be considered. The large bulk of Members felt that when the Estimates were being considered they could go away and enjoy themselves elsewhere. Anything they could do to increase the attendance of Members when the Estimates were being discussed would be for the good of the House and the country. Those who criticised the financial proposals of the Government were called unpatriotic, for they objected to large expenditure, and they were called niggardly if they objected to small items of expenditure. He was persuaded that if the Estimates were discussed on Thursday, as proposed by this Rule, at least half the Members would not be in attendance.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out the word 'Thursday,' and insert the word 'Monday.'" — (*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Thursday' stand part of the Question."

(8.12.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the hon. Member had almost entirely put his Amendment on the ground that as the result of the change he proposed Members

would be more ready to attend to their duties on Monday than on Thursday. He could understand the hon. Member's point of view more clearly if he had proposed Tuesday or Wednesday as the day on which Supply should be taken. But Monday was even worse for the purposes of the hon. Member's argument than the Government proposal of Thursday. Thursday came in the middle of the week, while Monday came at the beginning and immediately after what would become the Parliamentary holiday. The inevitable result would be that, if, as the hon. Member suggested, hon. Members would be slack in their attendance on Thursday, they would clearly not be in their places until Tuesday, and therefore the object which the hon. Member sought to attain would be defeated by the Amendment. He hoped that under the circumstances the hon. Member would see the propriety of not pressing the Amendment, as nothing could be gained by the change proposed. (8.15.)

(8.51.) MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said he regretted he could not agree with the reasons given by the First Lord of the Admiralty for not accepting the Amendment now before the House.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and forty Members being found present—

MR. O'MARA said he thought that the right hon. Gentleman was a little hasty in rejecting the Amendment, and could not quite have understood the grounds upon which it was moved. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment laid great stress upon the fact that he considered Thursday was given to Supply in order to facilitate the arrangements of Members who wished to get away at the week end; that they would look upon Friday as a slack day, and therefore be able to leave on the Thursday night. The First Lord of the Treasury had a perfect answer to the Amendment substituting Monday for Thursday for Supply, because, Monday being the first day of the week, hon. Members would remain away, and their holiday would be just as long; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the House could not approach the consideration of Supply with the same amount of efficiency on a Thursday, after three long nights, as they could upon a Monday. Human nature was the same all the world over, and it would be impossible for the House to approach Supply with any efficiency on Thursday, after being in attendance in the House up till midnight on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The inclination of the House would be not to approach matters of Supply with the energy which was necessary in the ordinary course; but when, later in the session, the Twelve o'clock Rule was suspended, the position would become simply intolerable, and the business of voting the supplies would become an absolute farce. The country could be very well run upon the legislation already passed, if it were only properly administered; it was the process of raising the revenue which required the energy of the House. Each Member desired money to be spent on matters in which he was interested—some desired it spent on education, some upon the Army and the Navy.

* MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is whether the House shall take Supply on Monday or Thursday.

MR. O'MARA said he was only trying to illustrate the importance of Supply, and the advantage of dealing with it when Members were fresh from the week end holiday, rather than on Thursday, when they were jaded. In his opinion, the particular Rule they were discussing was part of a well-defined policy for giving Members of the House an extra holiday. It was a curious fact that those who were out of the House desired to get in, and those who were in always desired to get away as often as possible; and the result of this Rule, if it passed, would be that they would get away on Wednesday night. He hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a division, in which case it would have his hearty support.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said his constituents were anxious for a more speedy and expeditious dealing with the business of the House, and

the alterations in the Rules which the Government had submitted to the House were for that purpose. To those alterations he gave his most hearty support, the more so as he noticed that those who, by their prolonged speeches, last session obstructed and prevented legislation, were on this occasion against the alterations in the Rules. It was most important that the finances of the great spending Departments of this country should be submitted to close examination. During the early days of Supply last session, considerable discussion was given to unimportant Votes, with the result that towards the end of the session large sums had to be voted without any discussion whatever. It was because he believed that the right hon. Gentleman desired to secure for Supply more business-like and adequate discussion, that he gave his thorough support to the proposal before the House.

(9.5.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 137; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 105.)

AYES.

Ackland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R. (T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose H
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray, C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederick Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock.)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thompson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOT THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward

Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duke, Henry Edward
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South.)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brion, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnel, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles, E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'ersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Whitley.

(9.15.) MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.) said his desire was that at the most important period of the session, when the Government were anxious to get through their business with dispatch, Friday should not be a *dies non* for a good many hon. Members. His object was to enable the Government to induce a number of hon. Members who otherwise would go away on their holidays to stay in London and attend to the business of the country which arose in Committee of Supply. It ought to be the desire of the Government to do their business thoroughly and efficiently, and no more important business was transacted in the House than the business of Supply. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider that his request that hon. Members should be asked to attend on Fridays was a reasonable one. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, after the word 'Thursday,' to insert the words 'except after Whitsuntide until Michaelmas, when it shall be first Order of the Day on all Friday sittings except the sittings on the third and fourth Fridays after Whit Sunday.'"—(*Mr. O'Shee.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not quite sure as to what the object of this Amendment is, but its effect would be to diminish the amount of time given to Supply and give more time for Government business. I hope the hon. Member will not press his Amendment.

Amendment negatived.

(9.20.) MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he again wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman to recollect that Ministers of the Crown were not privileged persons, but simply paid and salaried servants of the House. The right hon. Gentleman would very soon be taking a leading part at the Coronation. [Ministerial cries of "Question, Question."] Hon. Members would see if they would wait that it was the question, if they had enough intelligence to understand it. The right hon. Gentleman, as he said before, would be taking a leading part in the Coronation, and he wished to remind the First Lord of the Treasury that under the statute——

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to speak seriously to the Question before the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he was quite serious, and he was trying to show that there ought to be no privileges

allowed to Ministers of the Crown unless there was a very good reason for it. He was simply giving an illustration of a constitutional principle from the Act of Parliament, and he assured Mr. Speaker that he was perfectly serious.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to enter into a general discussion as to what are the privileges of Ministers of the Crown.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said this was a new system of introducing, under the Rules of the House, certain Motions which could only be moved by Ministers of the Crown, and that brought Ministers into a position which they ought not to occupy as servants of the House. Ministers ought not to have any exceptional privileges in the Orders of the House which were not accorded to the humblest private Member. Hon. Members were selected for the House of Commons by the people at large, exactly in the same way as Ministers of the Crown, and he was utterly averse to allowing any Minister to have the slightest privilege which did not belong to the humblest private Member. His whole contention was that these Rules were unconstitutional, and that the right hon. Gentleman was acting in an unconstitutional manner in this matter. He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out the words, 'the Motion of a Minister of the Crown,' and insert the words 'a Motion.'" — (*Mr. Swift Macneill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he could hardly think that the hon. Member was serious in this Amendment. If it were passed it would be inoperative, because, as Motions standing in the name of private Members stood at the end of business and not at the beginning, the matter would never come on for discussion. He did not think that that was a proposition for serious debate, and he hoped his hon. friend would not press his Amendment to a division.

(9.27.) MR. FLYNN said that the First Lord of the Treasury, by his argument, certainly seemed to be putting a great strain upon their common sense. The Amendment of his hon. friend simply meant that Ministers of the Crown ought not to practically usurp the business of Supply, and introduce it just when the convenience of the Government might require it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: But that is not the Amendment.

MR. FLYNN asked why should a Minister of the Crown alone be entitled to make such a Motion, when the same privilege was denied even to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Leader of any other section of the House? The more days they could get for Supply, the better they would be pleased, and the ordinary Member of the House would not, unless under great pressure, desire to have other business taken upon the days allotted to Supply.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he hoped that Ministers would put a stop to the absolute waste of time that was now going on. There was not a single Member present on the front Opposition Bench; there were hardly any Members in the House, and they had been debating this subject day after day, in order, he supposed, that they might have an autumn session. He appealed to the Government to exert a little pressure to get these Rules through.

MR. O'SHEE supported the Amendment, because he considered that a great many of the rights of private Members had been taken away, not only during this session, but in previous sessions. What was now proposed by the hon. Member for South Donegal would give unofficial Members an opportunity of expressing their views. By passing the Amendment, they would, to some extent, restore the rights of private Members.

MR. O'MARA asked whether the expression of the hon. Member for North Islington, that this discussion was a waste of time, was in order.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member thought it was out of order, he should have appealed to me at the time.

MR. O'MARA: I do not think myself it was in order, but perhaps hon. Members on the other side have privileges which are not accorded to those on this side.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to withdraw that expression, which is both unfounded and improper.

MR. O'MARA: I withdraw it. [AN HON. MEMBER: Sit down.]

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has the hon. Member any right to ask any Gentleman to sit down?

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not hear any expression of that kind, and as the expression did not reach my ears, I decline to take any notice of it.

MR. O'MARA said he shared the opinion of the hon. Member for South Donegal that a Minister of the Crown, in the matter under consideration, should not have greater privileges than an ordinary private Member. Ministers of the Crown did not necessarily represent the largest constituencies. As a matter of fact, they might sit for the smallest constituencies. If the Rule was amended in the way proposed, the House would decide upon a Motion made at the commencement of public business without debate.

(9.37.) SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said this was not an Amendment which he could support. On the contrary, he took the very opposite view from his hon. friend the Member for South Donegal, who seemed to regard it as a great privilege to be able to perform the function referred to in the proposed Standing Order. The reason for giving to a Minister of the Crown alone the right of making the Motion was that the Ministers of the Crown were responsible to the House for its business, and he was one of those who took the view that, in regard to the submission of Votes in Committee of Supply, and the modes in which they were to be dealt with, the House ought not to divest the Government of the day of the responsibility properly attaching to them. For that reason he had always had an objection to the kindly proposal the Leader of the House had often made, that the selection of the particular Votes to be taken on particular days should be left to a Committee, and even a Committee of those opposed to him in politics. He objected to this, because he thought it was peculiarly the function of the Government and the Leader of the House not only to guide the House in this matter, but to undertake the duty of determining what should be done. Therefore, when he found the usual phrase was here inserted which occurred in many other cases that a certain thing should happen,

"Unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown,"

he confessed that he thought that was a perfectly proper stipulation, and in this particular case it was more eminently proper than in many to which it might be applied.

MR. POWER said he rose to remind the hon. Member for North Islington that if time had been wasted in the discussion of the new Rules, as much of that time had been occupied by hon. Members opposite as by Gentlemen on this side of the House. He thought his hon. friends were right in opposing the new Rules because their rights were being taken away, and so far from blaming them, he rather complimented them. They could not forget that last year at Blenheim the right hon. Gentleman declared that most of these Rules were directed against the Irish Members and Irish representation, and certainly they made no apology for taking whatever steps they thought right against them.

(9.42.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 185; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 106.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R. (T'r H'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, Wm. Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs.
M'Crae, George
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, D'vid J (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Partington, Oswald
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudd'rsfi'd
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P (Glouc., Stroud
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Delany, William
Doogan, P. C.
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sullivan, Donal
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

(9.55.) MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that he did not propose for a moment to elaborate the arguments in favour of the Amendment on the Paper, arguments which the House had heard with so much patience and forbearance during the last two or three years. He would remind the House, however, that sixty years ago there was a lucid interval, when a distinguished Member of the House, Mr. Milner Gibson, moved an Amendment limiting the duration of speeches to an hour, If he had proposed half-an-hour he would have done even better. He was supported by two Gentlemen who were experts in public speaking —Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright—and was only beaten by a majority of twenty votes. He himself had moved a Resolution in a similar sense, and had carried it by a majority of three to one in a fairly large House. In every deliberate Assembly in the Metropolis, at any rate, from the Church House at Westminster to the august assembly which met in Spring Gardens, there was a similar practice, and in almost every Colony in the Empire a time limit was the rule, and worked with the greatest possible success. When it was objected that the House of Commons had lasted for some 600 years, and that what was good enough for their predecessors was good enough for them, his answer was that things were by no means what they were. Formerly, Members came there to vote and not to speak. They used to sit in rows on each side of the House and applaud everything that was said by the wise, great, and eminent occupants of the front Benches; and sometimes they had their reward in an apotheosis in the House of Lords. A proposal like what he submitted required no special pleading; it spoke for itself. The man who in those days could not deliver his soul in a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes, did not know his trade, and was not fit to be a Member of Parliament.

Amendment proposed—

"In line five, after the word 'Debate,' to insert the words 'and no Member shall, in Committee of Supply, speak more than once to the same Question or for longer than twenty minutes.'"—(*Major Rasch.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I rise at once in the character of one of the members of that section of the House which, in this matter, is led by the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I am a supporter and an advocate of a time limit for speeches, and I have both spoken in favour of that and voted with the hon. and gallant Gentleman on previous occasions. But I am bound to say I cannot do so on the present occasion, because he has mixed the matter of a time limit up with single speeches in Committee of Supply, which is another question altogether. If there is any part of the business of the House for which a restriction is less required, it seems to me to be Committee of Supply. The hon. and gallant Gentleman appears to have forgotten the fact that a Minister has to defend the Vote under discussion, and that even on individual points in it very serious and complicated questions may arise. I do not know any part of the business of the House in which there is less of an attempt to make a display or to advertise themselves on the part of Members than in Committee of Supply. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman were to direct his attack against the long and tiresome speeches on the Second Reading of Bills, I could see very much more reason in what he proposed, and I should be disposed myself, with

due conditions and modifications, to support his ideal. But the business of Supply is the very time when we ought to give power to a Member to get up again and again, and to a Minister to get up again and again, and to explain more fully some difficult point which had been brought forward in the discussion. Supply, as I have said, is the most important part of the business of the House, and I do not think we ought to begin with it as the particular portion of our duties to which this experiment should be applied. I make this declaration against the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman as one who has supported him on the general principle of short speeches, to which I adhere strongly.

(10.5.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am one of those who think that in all probability the time will come when the House will be compelled to adopt not the Amendment now before us but some limitation on the duration of speeches. I should not myself in the least object to that time coming quickly, if I could see my way to a particular plan which would carry my hon. friend's intention out without really injuring the efficiency of the House. I am in entire sympathy with the general object of my hon. friend, but as regards the subject of Supply, which is the only thing now before us, I do not see how we are to get over two difficulties. The first is that in Supply we very often have debates of the first magnitude on policy. The Colonial Secretary is, for instance, attacked, and he makes a great statement upon South African policy. Is it possible to confine him to twenty minutes? Surely the thing is absurd on the face of it, and we must abandon any notion of the kind. That difficulty seems to me to be insuperable, but there is another difficulty which has been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, with whom I am in entire accord in this matter, and that is that on the Estimates, as a rule, a Minister is on his defence. He can defend himself, but no one else can defend him. No one else knows the case. It is very easy to say, "Let a colleague get up"; but the colleague does not know the details, and the Minister must stand or fall by his own policy; and unless you give him a chance of replying more than once, you hand him over bound hand and foot. Even in the discussion of these Rules I found great difficulty in not being able to speak more than once, and it has been only by the extreme kindness and consideration of the House that I have been able to put the case at all. No one can tell in what way an attack may develop. An Amendment is started, in which the mover does not seem to have very much interest. No one else seems to have very much interest in it, and a Minister gets up, who is perhaps equally perfunctory, and then gradually the skirmish develops into a first class battle, in which the Minister must be allowed to have his chance. For these two reasons, which I do not wish to develop further, I think my hon. friend's Amendment will not do in the form in which it stands. If by his ingenuity, which is very great, and by his power of compressing observations, which I think is unrivalled, my hon. friend could bring forward some plan for the limitation of speeches, I am sure he would have no more enthusiastic disciple than myself; and I gather also from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that he will have the unusual advantage for an independent Member of having two Front Bench men in his favour.

*(10.10.) SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) thought that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would not, on consideration, be able to vote for his own Amendment. He agreed that the practice which had sprung up from the time of Mr. Goschen of making a statement on the Army and Navy before the Speaker left the Chair was a most unfortunate one, and he had often heard the hon. and gallant Gentleman attack the present system for its inconvenience. Surely the hon. and gallant Gentleman would not suggest that in a year when great military changes were being made the Secretary of State for War should be confined to twenty minutes.

*MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said he would have the greatest pleasure in seconding the Amendment. Both the

Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition had given expression to the opinion that they were in favour of short speeches. If they really were in favour of short speeches, he hoped the Leader of the House would take advantage of the alteration of the Rules to give effect to that opinion. He wished to point out that neither his hon. and gallant friend nor himself wished to deny, in any way, to Ministers or to Members of the Front Opposition Bench an extended time to develop their arguments. He was quite aware that it was necessary that they should have an extension of time, and he was quite ready to give it to them. During the course of the debate they had heard a great deal of the experience of hon. Gentlemen who had been in the House for many years. His hon. and gallant friend had been in the House for seventeen years. He himself had only been in the House seventeen months, but during that period he had been an observer, and the observations he had made led him to the conclusion that the Amendment which had been moved, or something like it, was very necessary. He wished to carry hon. Members back to August of last year. After the expiration of the twenty days which had been allotted to Supply, what happened? On August 7th, the last of the days allotted, there remained some sixty millions or eighty millions of money to be voted. The discussion was commenced at half-past five, and one hon. Member of the Irish Party spoke for an hour and a half on a Vote for some £46,000 for local government in Ireland. He was followed by other hon. Members on the Irish Benches, and between them they occupied all the available time on the discussion of that Vote, and from ten o'clock at night until six o'clock in the morning the closure was being moved, and hon. Members walked through the division lobbies twenty-six times, and sixty millions or eighty millions of money was passed without a word of discussion. Although the Leader of the Irish Party was largely responsible for what had taken place, he rose about two o'clock in the morning and said that in his experience of Parliament he had never known such a scandalous state of things. Would any hon. Member, remembering what had taken place, say there was no necessity for the Amendment before the House? As long as it was possible—and it would be possible under the new Rules—for a repetition of such a state of affairs, there would be a necessity for limiting speeches in the direction indicated. He challenged the Leader of the House, or any other supporter of the proposed alteration of the Rules, to say how such a state of affairs could be avoided in the future if it was open to Members to obstruct business in the same way as they did last year. During the recess a great deal was heard as to the necessity of altering the Rules of Procedure, in order that the dignity and traditions of the House of Commons might be upheld. Whenever the matter was mentioned to the electors, and it was pointed out that £80,000,000 of their money could be voted without a single word of discussion, an unanimous desire was expressed that the Rules should be altered. New Members had been told that they were going to be destroyed, extinguished, or crushed, while one prominent Member had stated that the proposed new Rules set the seal upon the final humiliation of private Members. They might be killed, but when they were buried it would be very appropriate to write on their tombstones that they had been killed by long speeches. It might be that they were going to be crushed or extinguished, but, at any rate, the new Members would feel it less than the older Members because they had had no other experience. During the seventeen months he had been a Member of the House he had many times gone very reluctantly into the Lobby in support of the Minister of the Crown who had moved the closure, but he ventured to tell the Government that if, as the result of these new Rules, in August next the House were again called upon to vote a similar amount of money without discussion as was the case last year, then even more reluctantly, if at all, would he record his vote for the closure. There was now a golden opportunity to deal effectively with this great scandal, and he sincerely hoped the Government would not let that opportunity be lost.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) said there was a general

consensus of opinion on both sides of the House that speeches ought, if possible, to be curtailed. In order to get rid, once for all, of the difficulty suggested by the Leader of the House, he moved, as an Amendment to the Amendment, after the word "Member," to insert "other than a Minister of the Crown." That would give a Minister, if attacked, power to reply at length. As to other Members, if they could not say all they had to say in twenty minutes, there were twenty of the colleagues who could follow, and between them have plenty of time to say all that was desired.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

"After the word 'Member,' to insert the words 'other than a Minister of the Crown.'"—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*)—

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

(10.21.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR thought the Amendment just moved did not improve the original proposal. It introduced a principle which the House of Commons had never yet accepted and he hoped never would accept, viz., that there should not be absolute and perfect equality between all Members. Then, too, it would probably be admitted by all official and ex-official Members of the House that a Member who made an attack on the policy of a Minister might have just as much right to a longer time for the development of his attack as the Minister for his reply. The Leader of the House was a very important Member, so also were the Leader of the official Opposition and the Leader of the Irish Opposition. Sometimes he thought the latter was the most important of all. If they were to have any first-class debates upon the policy of a Minister, it would be as absurd to limit the duration of the speech of the Member who opened the attack as to limit that of the Minister who replied. The hon. Member for Newcastle had delivered a remarkable, interesting, and significant speech, with almost the whole of which he found himself able to agree. Unfortunately, however, the premisses of the hon. Member, which he adopted, led him to a different conclusion. The hon. Member had complained that after spending many hours in discussing a Vote of £46,000 for Irish Local Government, the House proceeded to vote £60,000,000 for the services of the year without any debate whatever—a state of things which he described as scandalous. To that he (the speaker) said "ditto" from the bottom of his heart. It was a scandal that Irishmen should have to discuss Irish Local Government in this House at all. He did not, however, rise for the purpose of developing an argument in favour of Irish Home Rule, although all discussion led to Ireland; but he wished, in passing, to point out that the speech of the hon. Member, taken with that of the First Lord of the Treasury earlier in the evening, formed an admirable and irresistible plea for that which was the complement of Home Rule for Ireland, viz., Home Rule for England, and for the British Empire.

As to the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member for the Chelmsford Division, the First Lord had conclusively pointed out that a Minister could not be expected to limit to twenty minutes his defence of a great question of public policy. The hon. Member for Newcastle had met that difficulty by complaining of the length of the speeches of Irish Members. It, therefore, appeared that the proposal ought really to read that Ministers of the Crown and English Members were to have as much time as they liked, but that all Irish Members should be limited to twenty minutes. ["No."] His hon. friend did not support that, but that was the difficulty of starting upon the inclined pack of ice—you never knew where you would get to. If the undemocratic and unworthy principle of making distinctions and grades between different Members were adopted, there would also have to be distinctions, not merely between ministerial and private Members, but also between Members of different nationalities. The hon. and gallant Member had made two proposals. First he suggested that in Committee of Supply no Member should address the House for a longer period than twenty minutes in one speech. That was grotesquely absurd, as under such a Rule it would be possible for a Member to make three or four or more speeches of twenty minutes each. The hon. and gallant Member saw the absurdity of that proposal, and amended it by limiting

Members to one speech of not more than twenty minutes. But that destroyed the whole foundation of, and reason for, debates in Committee. It was not for the purpose of encouraging talk that the House made a distinction between speeches delivered on Second Readings and those delivered in Committee. It was because in Committee details were discussed, and in order to discuss details properly it was necessary that a Member should be able to speak more than once.

As to the limit of twenty minutes, he agreed that speeches should be curtailed. But the usage of the House in regard to the length of speeches had changed in a remarkable degree within the last twenty-two years. As the House had been told, when the First Lord entered the House it was a common practice for private Members' Bills to be talked out; but now, as a result of the closure, nobody attempted to talk out a Bill on a Wednesday afternoon. The closure, like every other political cause, had had many effects which nobody had contemplated or foreseen, and it had undoubtedly completely transformed the character of debates in the House. The hon. and gallant Member thought that speeches were very long and the debates of great duration. If he had been a Member when he (the speaker) was about to deliver—until closured by a *coup d'état* on the part of the Speaker of the day—a two hours speech in the course of a forty-one hours sitting, he would know what really prolonged debates were. To the old stagers in the House the debates in the present piping times of peace were a model of compression—almost of undue and artificial compression. These things should be left to natural causes. What would happen if such artificial limits were imposed? If it were laid down that no Member should speak for more than twenty minutes, the result would be that every Member who spoke at all would speak for twenty minutes [" No."] If debate were artificially shortened in one direction it would be lengthened in another. Take the case of an Irish Coercion Bill being introduced with such a rule in existence. Could it be supposed that every Irish Member would not consider it his duty to exercise his right to the fullest extent? The result of the Rule in that case would be that, instead of having one or two speeches of thirty, forty, or fifty minutes duration, the House would have to listen to twenty or thirty—[" eighty "]—of twenty minutes each, and the last state of the House would be worse than the first. He had seen a similar arrangement tried in the House of Representatives in the United States. He had great respect for the constitution of the United States, but in no sense of the word could it be said that the debates in the House of Representatives were as real or relevant as those in the House of Commons. What happened there? If a Member did not want the whole of the time allotted to him, he delegated a portion to some other Member, with the result that the debates were more like a dress rehearsal at a theatre than the relevant and pertinent discussions of the House of Commons. He might illustrate by an experience how the system worked. The question under discussion was whether or not a certain apartment should have a tesselated pavement. The Speaker left the Chair for a time, and when he returned he found an honourable gentleman from a division of the State of Tennessee ending his speech with the words—

"And now, Sir, I think I have sufficiently vindicated my own conduct and that of my State in the late Civil War."

These artificial rules had brought the House of Representatives to a discussion not of the actual issues of the day, but of the history of parties and the history of the country. He hoped the House would reject the Amendment as being destructive of one of the best virtues of the House of Commons, viz., the naturalness, actuality, and relevance of its debates

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not intend to discuss the Amendment, as he had already sufficiently expressed his views on the subject. The debate had been extremely interesting, but it was really resolving itself into a general discussion of the management of debates as a whole. He hoped, therefore, it would not be thought unreasonable if he asked them to come to a decision on the Amendment, so as to make some progress with the question before the House.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(10.38.) Question put, "That the words 'and no Member shall, in Committee of Supply, speak more than once to the same Question, or for longer than twenty minutes,' be there inserted:—

The House divided:—Ayes, 24; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 107.)

AYES.

Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Broadhurst, Henry
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Cautley, Henry Strother
Elibank, Master of
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Lough, Thomas
M'Kenna, Reginald
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Priestley, Arthur
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renwick, George
Schwann, Charles E.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Robert Wallace and Mr. Fuller.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Brigg, John
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cogan, Denis J.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R. (T'r H'ml'ts, S. Geo.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Donelan, Capt. A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Frank
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Ffrench, Peter
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, South
Gore, Hn G. R C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wed'esbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.
Grenfell, William Henry
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hammond, John
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laure'ce (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. (Leicester)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Herman-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Keswick, William
Lambert, George
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Fred. N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman

Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lundon, W.
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
Majendie. James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, John J.
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'ths.
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murphy, John
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Myers, William Henry
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nolan, Joseph (Lough, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. T. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Penn, John
Pickard, Benjamin
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt. Col. A. C. E (Taunton
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Hudd'rsfi'd
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

(10.54.) MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he would respond to the appeal made by the First Lord of the Treasury to leave the details and approach the heart of the question. He rose to move the omission of the second paragraph, which proposed that not more than twenty days should be allotted for the consideration of Supply. This second paragraph in the new Procedure Rule was the very heart and centre of the whole Rule. It provided that—

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the fifth of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account."

The whole Rule was simply an amplification of this paragraph. All the new Members elected to this Parliament and the last Parliament had had no experience in Committee of Supply different to that which they had had under the existing Rule. He was addressing a large body of hon. Members who had had some experience upon this question before this extraordinary Rule was adopted. This Rule, of which they had had six years experience, had been a gigantic failure, and they ought to take this opportunity of modifying it in the interests of the House. The questions raised in the other amended Rules were mostly theoretic questions, but of this Rule they had had considerable experience, and it had reduced the business of Supply to a farce, and the House would never get control of the Estimates until this Rule was seriously modified. What was the object of the Rule? What was the business of the Supply Committee which this Rule was intended to facilitate? The first object of the business of Committee of Supply was to bring the national expenditure under the control of the House. In this respect the Rule had entirely failed, because it had not brought the national expenditure under the control of Parliament.

Upon this point he would give a few figures. The present Supply Rule had been in existence for six years, and he had taken out the amount of Supply which had not been discussed at all. The amount of Supply which did not

come under the control or consideration of the House at all was as follows:—In 1897 £52,000,000, in 1898 £43,000,000, in 1899 £56,000,000, in 1900 £75,000,000, and in 1901 £88,000,000. Therefore during those five years a large proportion of the Supply of this House was not considered by the House of Commons at all, consequently he was justified in saying that this Rule had failed in what ought to be its first object. A most remarkable statement had been made by the hon. Member for Newcastle, who said that he had been in the habit of addressing meetings on this point in the country, and when he asserted on the platform that in the House of Commons they passed £60,000,000 of Supply without a single remark, every person in the meeting agreed that this was a state of things which ought to be altered. If the House maintained this Supply Rule as it now stood, a vast and increasing body of the expenditure must pass every year without any examination whatever. The second object of Supply was to secure the State against extravagance and waste in the financial expenditure, and the Rule had lamentably failed in that respect, for there had sprung up the grossest extravagance in many departments. In the year when this rule was first adopted the expenditure was £105,000,000, but the total expenditure of the country this year would be no less than £210,000,000. It might be said that the war was responsible for this. Not only had war, like expenditure, increased, but civil service and every branch of expenditure had developed in a very extraordinary way. In fact it was a byword that there was no party in the House that stood up for economy. There were some Members who had maintained the principles of economy as well as they could, but they had not been quite successful. There had been in every branch of expenditure in the State the most gross extravagance during the last six years. In every part of the Empire there had been the greatest extravagance. Our warlike expenditure had increased to £2 10s. per head of the population and that was most extravagant. Millions had been spent on railways leading to no one knew where in Africa.

* MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to go into details of the expenditure. He may generally state his opinion as to the tendency of expenditure.

MR. LOUGH said he accepted that ruling. He only meant to give an instance. He had said enough to make his point good. They wished to secure efficiency for the vast sums which were expended. It had become a byword that we were not very efficient in this country at the present time. There was a Party, to which many of them must wish all success in their endeavours, who had made "efficiency" their watchword. When debating the Rules they ought to keep in view the question of administration. What, after all, was the meaning of examining Votes in Committee of Supply? The meaning of it was that this House should obtain an affective control over the administrative Departments of the country. Was there any man who would say that the House had secured proper control over the departments during the last six years? He ventured to say that the House had lost any control of the Departments which it formerly had. He believed that the great Departments were without control. There were two controls which ought to be exercised—one was that of the Minister in charge of a Department, and the other was the possesser by this House. He did not rely on the Minister if he was not stimulated in his action by this House. If this House had sufficient control the country would have some security that the business of the Departments was properly carried on. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that he was always willing to bring forward any Vote which the House wished to discuss. Nothing could be more conciliatory, but when they got a discussion it was desultory and came to nothing whatever. The Ministry knew that under the Rules which settled the time allowed for voting Supply the votes must inevitably be got through. But Ministers could not shake off their responsibility like that. It was the business of Ministers to secure fair and adequate discussion of all those great questions which arose in Committee of Supply. A Return had been issued within the last few days showing that

proposals to reduce Estimates in Committee of Supply had only been carried three or four times in the last ten years. He had heard the Leader of the House argue that reductions were carried so seldom that the discussions were not of much practical use. The discussions might bear fruit in future years. If discussion was well conducted in the House in regard to any estimate it could not be entirely fruitless. They must not judge on the utility of discussion by the number of times a Motion for reduction was carried. He remembered an instance where discussion tended to economy. About eighteen months ago it was proposed to expend £30,000 on the terrace of the Houses of Parliament. He protested and received the support of the others, with the result that the proposal was abandoned and the money was saved. He could give many illustrations to show that criticism in the House had very much reduced expenditure. He thought it would be very easy to find a more effective way of dealing with Supply than that provided by this Rule. He suggested that Committees might be appointed to deal with the Navy, Army, and Civil Service Estimates, and that there should then be a Report stage of not more than twenty days in the House. The twenty days which had been allotted year after year were wasted. Ministers were not anxious to get Supply through, because all their motive to do so had been removed. He wanted to get rid of the automatic closure of Supply. They should take away the present element of compulsion, and give elasticity to the Committee, allowing Members to criticise the votes in an honest and fair spirit. The matter had become one of gigantic importance in which the taxpayers of the country were deeply interested.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 6, to leave out the words from the words 'Not more than,' to the words 'as first Order,' in line 11, both inclusive"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account, stand part of the Question."

Mr. Lough.

(11.20.) Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said it was true that, if the Amendment were adopted, the Supply Rule which had existed for some years would virtually disappear, and the House would revert to the *status quo ante* and to a method of discussing Supply which, for some reason, appeared to find favour with the hon. Member. He would not claim that the Supply Rule was in every point of view an improvement on the ancient system. He did not say the House had lost absolutely nothing by the change. But he did claim that by it the House had been able to discuss Supply, and had escaped the torture of an absolutely obstructive style of debate. The old system conduced to no economy of expenditure. Under it, even the oldest Member could recollect nothing in the way of criticism of Estimates, or condemnation of expenditure, such as took place in the time of Joseph Hume. The Government at long intervals brought in Votes of Account, on which there were miscellaneous and usually not very profitable discussions, ranging over the whole realm of political knowledge, and leading to no conclusive result. Supply got piled up, and at the very end of the session, a jaded House, diminished and shorn of its Members, went through the Votes till two, three, four, or five o'clock in the morning, getting through its task in physical exhaustion. The hon. Member appeared to think that there was now no adequate opportunity of criticising the administration of the departments. This, at all events, was secured—that week after week, from the beginning of the session to the end, there was opportunity for any hon. Member to make any criticism he chose. How could a Minister be perfunctory in his defence when the attack was made at an hour convenient to the House and when the debates were reported and he could be judged by his speeches in the Press and the country? In the old days he was on his defence at three in the morning, half-asleep himself, and his critics half asleep, and no reporting possible. What they should aim at was to try to divide the session equitably between the various claims, not of the Government, but of the country and the House. His opinion was that not too little time but too much time was given to Supply. Under the existing system, thirty-five days were devoted to Supply. More days could not possibly be

allotted to it without restricting the time to be given to legislation. He believed it was Mr. Gladstone's opinion, and it certainly was his, that it was not desirable to ask the House to sit, broadly speaking, for more than six months of the year. It was inevitable that the House should sit more than six months this year. But he thought that as a general rule a six months session ought to be adopted. Was it conceivable that in a six months session they could carry on the business of the House if they were to give more than thirty-five days to Supply?

(11.27.) MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that the question to be decided was whether this Rule was to be stereotyped instead of being subject to the approval of the House each session. He appealed to hon. Members on both sides of the House as to whether it could be said, in the face of the closing scenes of last session, that the Rule was a success. On the last day allotted to Supply, Votes amounting to £67,000,000 of public money were passed without discussion, and on the last day for Report of Supply £86,000,000 were passed under the same conditions. He for one could not admit that the Rule as it stood, without modification or alteration, had been a practical success. He would state to the House why, in his opinion, that result had been reached. It was not the fault of the Rule alone. There were concurrent circumstances which had led to the result he had described. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to two causes which produced that result, without being aware of the significance of the allusion he was making. He spoke of Votes of credit and alluded to the old practice by which two or three Votes on account were taken in the course of a session, and the right hon. Gentleman deprecated that practice. It appeared to him, however, that it was the abandonment of that very practice which had led to the result he had described. Twenty years ago, when a Vote on account for the Civil Service was asked for, for more than two months the House refused to grant it. The old practice was to limit a Vote on account to two months Supply. What had they had during the present session? A Vote on account for £19,000,000 out of the total of £44,000,000 for the Civil Service had been granted. That represented provision for fully five months expenditure. It was not one Vote on account, but the only Vote on account. At the beginning of the session the Government got all the supply they needed for the session, and with the certainty that they would get the rest on a certain day towards the end of the session, all temptation was removed to exercise any control over Supply. He had not been as long in the House as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, but he thought he had sat through more debates in Supply than the right hon. Gentleman, and in his opinion there was only one thing which could save the House of Commons from the deplorable state of things which had arisen, and that was to have an orderly and equally divided discussion over all the Estimates. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not think he was making a personal attack on him, but what was wanted was constant, vigilant, and intelligent leadership of the House all through Committee of Supply. That was no reflection on the Leader of the House, because he was not present during most of the debates in Committee of Supply. It was not usual for the Leader of the House to lead on such occasions. During last session the right hon. Gentleman was present during the whole of the debates on one Department, viz., the Navy Department, and he kept an almost incessant control over the Navy Estimates. But he did not attempt to control the whole course of Supply. He was not making a reflection on the right hon. Gentleman, but he was showing what he thought was a self-evident proposition—that where the Government got all its money by an automatic process, unless the debates were evenly distributed over the whole financial year, it would be impossible not to have £70,000,00 or £80,000,000 guillotined without debate at all at the end of the session.

The right hon. Gentleman had been criticised more than once for his statement as to the principle on which he said the new Rules were based. The principle put forward was that the Rules of the House should be brought into

conformity with the practice of the House. If that were applied to Estimates, the Government would get all their Supply in two Votes. Then the right hon. Gentleman said again tonight, as he had said often before, that it was for the Opposition to select the subject for debates. It was not for the Opposition, but for the responsible leaders of the House. It was for the responsible leaders, by all the means under their control, including closure, and not excluding the gentler arts in which the right hon. Gentleman was proficient, to have an even distribution of Supply over the session. That might be making too great a demand on any one Minister, but without it he did not see that with a large, solitary Vote on account at the beginning of the session, and automatic closure at the end, they would have any other but the discreditable and deplorable result he had described. Could nothing else be done? The hon. Member for Islington pointed to an increase in the number of days. He would not argue that now, but there was an Amendment on the Paper, which he regretted was out of order, which would have raised the alternative, and the only alternative, and that was that the Estimates should be referred to a Select Committee. That would save the situation, and would give to the new Rules a character which at the present moment they did not possess. What was the great blot in the new Rules? It was that they contained no proposal whatever for increasing the control of the House over expenditure. That was what was wanted. The Amendment to which he had referred proposed that the Estimates should be referred to the Committee before they came before the House. He would earnestly press that on the right hon. Gentleman. If the new system of closure at both ends of the session was to prevail, then devolution, in the sense of a reference to a Committee, became absolutely necessary. For his own part, he would go further, and would suggest not only that the Estimates should be referred to a Select Committee at the beginning of the session, and that they should come before the House with the criticisms and the Report of the Committee, but that afterwards, when the Estimates were executed, when the House had given its mandate, a Select Committee should enquire how that mandate had been executed. In other words, he would like to see a new Committee, on the lines of the Public Accounts Committee, formed for the purpose of examining into the manner in which the Estimates were executed. That might be done by adding administrative criticism to the functions of the Public Accounts Committee. At present no Minister was bound to pay the slightest attention to the Public Accounts Committee when its criticism dealt with administration. There was the case of the Royal yacht last year. What was the use of the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee with reference to that? The Department concerned could snap its fingers at the Committee and say it was a matter of administration. His suggestion was that the Public Accounts Committee should be empowered to look into the Estimates and see whether the money had been properly expended. Allusion had been made to a party in this House and in the country which was pledged to efficiency in matters of administration. He would point out that the two proposals he was now making—and he was speaking entirely for himself—had been formulated by a Committee with reference to public administration, of which his noble friend Lord Rosebery was chairman and of which he himself was a member. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would receive what he had said in the spirit in which it was offered, and he thought the hon. Member who moved the Amendment had rendered an important service to the House and the country by calling attention to what had been well described as th heart of the new Rules.

(11.46.) MR. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) said that if hon. Gentlemen opposite would practice efficiency when in office and talk less about it when out of office, it would be better for all parties. The hon. Member charged the Leader of the House with being absent, but they all knew that the Leader of the House was almost always at his post. He did not intend to criticise the Rule; it was an old friend. It was, however,

Mr. Edmund Robertson.

now proposed to make it a permanent, instead of a sessional, Standing Order. He thought it would be a very dangerous thing to draw a hard-and-fast limit of twenty days for all time. It was as if a railway company every day ran a train of the same size to a certain place, whether there were many passengers or few. It would be better if a more elastic principle could be adopted. Reference had been made to the manner in which the United States carried on its business. He believed the custom was that the two Leaders of the House of Representatives met and valued the time of a debate, and agreed, for instance, that such and such a debate was worth eight hours and another debate only worth six hours, but they had no hard-and-fast Rule. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would allow the Rule to remain a sessional order and not make it a permanent order.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that the Amendment was one of the most important proposals that had yet been submitted to the House. [HON. MEMBERS: Divide, Divide!] Ought such an important debate to be brought to a conclusion when it had occupied only fifty minutes? Only four speeches had been delivered, and he could assure hon. Members that he did not rise for the purpose of unduly prolonging the discussion. Supply afforded private Members the only opportunity they had of discussing internal or external questions, such as foreign politics, the war in South Africa or the situation in China, and, therefore, he would make no apology whatever for continuing the discussion. Under the Rule, twenty days were given for the discussion of Supply, plus three extra days, which, however, would only be provided in case a Minister of the Crown chose to put them at the disposal of the House. As a matter of fact, however, no less than thirty-five days were habitually occupied in discussing various items of supply, and why, therefore, should there be a pretence that only twenty days would be occupied. It would be much better to get rid of what was no doubt an automatic Rule, but which, more or less, was nothing less than a sham, and allot from time to time so much of the time of the House as the Government could afford for the adequate discussion of Supply. Something like £10,000,000 of Supply was on an average taken on each day, and various subjects came up for discussion. If the first item happened to be interesting, it occupied the attention of Members on both sides, and the whole of the rest of the Vote remained undiscussed. Surely that was not a very desirable state of things. It had been truly pointed out that reductions were moved in Supply, not for the purpose of reducing expenditure, but in order to call attention to the policy which entailed the expenditure. If the present proposal were compared with the proposal of last session, it would be seen that it gave some better protection to the private Member, but at the same time it was quite certain that a great number of votes and very large sums of money would have to be passed without any adequate discussion by the House by means of the guillotine. That might or might not be a desirable policy, but he maintained that there ought to be no pretence whatever about it.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that the Rule under discussion was of such a far-reaching and important character that it was absolutely necessary that every section of the House, and certainly the section he had the honour to represent, should be heard in regard to it. No section in the House had suffered more from the operation of the old Rule, when it was a sessional order, than the section which represented Ireland. He believed it was absolutely true that during the past five years all the most important votes dealing with the administration of Ireland had been closured without any discussion whatever. While listening to the speech of the hon. Member who introduced the Amendment, he thought the House must be impressed by the fact that during the past five years Estimates of the United Kingdom to the extent of £340,000,000 had been closured without any discussion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The discussion will be adjourned until Monday next, and I only do so on the remote chance that the Budget may not come on. Hon. Members will not interpret the fact, if the Rules stand first on the Order Paper for Monday, that the Budget will not come on on that day. I believe it will.

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

POOR LAW SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND).

Bill to provide for Superannuation Allowances to certain Local Officers and Servants in Ireland, and for Contributions towards such Allowances by such Officers and Servants; and to make other relative provisions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Malley.

POOR LAW SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide for Superannuation Allowances to certain Local Officers and Servants in Ireland, and for Contributions towards such Allowances by such Officers and Servants; and to make other relative provisions," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 150.]

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.

Return ordered, "showing (1) the Rates of Duties, Taxes, or Imposts collected by the Imperial Officers; (2) the Quantities or Amounts taxed; (3) the Gross Receipts derived from each Duty; (4) the net Receipts and Appropriations thereof in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1902; and (1) the aggregate Gross Receipts derived from all such Duties, Taxes, or Imposts under the principal heads of Revenue; (2) the aggregate net Receipts; (3) the Charges of Collection; and (4) the Produce, after deducting these Charges, in each of the ten years ending the 31st day of March 1902."

"And, Notes to show any changes in the Taxes, Duties, and Imposts consequent upon the acceptance of the Budget Proposals of 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 350 of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Goddard.*)

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—PEACE RUMOURS.

On the Motion for the Adjournment—

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In view of the rumours which are current, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will say whether there is any news from South Africa.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am acquainted with the rumours to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I am glad that he has given me an opportunity of dissipating these current views, for which there is no foundation. We have no information at all from South Africa, nor, in the nature of things, could there be any such information.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 14th April, 1902.

MARQUESS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.

Petition of Terence John Temple, Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, Viscount Clandeboye, and Baron Dufferin and Clandeboye, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

SAT FIRST.

THE EARL OF MUNSTER

Sat first in Parliament after the death of his brother.

THE LORD BATEMAN

Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

North Warwickshire Water.
Brighton and Rottingdean Seashore Electric Tramroad.
Fareham Gas.
Clay Cross Railway.
Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.
National Telephone Company (Kingston-upon-Hull) [H.L.].
National Telephone Company (Manchester Area) [H.L.].
East Worcestershire Water.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

WEARDALE AND SHILDON DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

Petition for additional provision, of the Weardale and Shildon District Waterworks Company; together with proposed Amendments and clauses annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

RUSTHALL MANOR BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

DERBYSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL.

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Order made on the 20th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NORTH-EAST LONDON RAILWAY (No. 1) BILL [H.L.],
NORTH-EAST LONDON RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL [H.L.],
PICCADILLY AND CITY RAILWAY (No. 1) BILL [H.L.],
PICCADILLY AND CITY RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

Leave given to the Select Committee to consolidate the Bills into one Bill.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Lancashire County (Lunatic Asylums) Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to. All Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by Counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also Counsel for the Bill.

SOUTH SHIELDS, SUNDERLAND, AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
EXETER AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
MEXBOROUGH AND SWINTON TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
HASTINGS TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
LIMPSFIELD AND OXTED WATER BILL [H.L.],

Read 2ª.

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

SADDLEWORTH, SPRINGHEAD, AND LEES TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order) and dispensed with, with respect to a Petition of the County Council of Lancaster. Leave given to present the said Petition.

CITY OF LONDON (SPITALFIELDS MARKET) BILL,

COMMERCIAL GAS BILL,

FURNESS RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL,

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL,

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL,

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (CRUMLIN VIADUCT) BILL,

HIGHAM FERRERS AND RUSHDEN WATER BOARD BILL,

KENT ELECTRIC POWER BILL,

MANCHESTER CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL,

NOTTINGHAM AND RETFORD RAILWAY BILL,

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Order of the House of the 17th February, 1896, viz.:—

CHARITY COMMISSION.

Forty-ninth Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales. (March 22.)

SOUTH AFRICA.

Despatch by Lord Kitchener, dated 8th February, relative to military operations in South Africa (in continuation of [Cd. 890]). (March 24.)

ARMY (VOLUNTEERS).

Increases and decreases. (March 25.)

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 352. Cocos Islands (Report for 1901). (March 25.)

EDUCATION.

Regulation for evening schools, from 1st August, 1902, to 31st July, 1903. (March 25.)

LUNACY (SCOTLAND).

Forty-fourth Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. (March 26.)

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.

Account of moneys received and paid by the Chamberlain of the City of London, for the year 1901-1902; also an account of extraordinary works executed, other than general repairs, for the same period. (March 26.)

LOAN FUND BOARD OF IRELAND.

Sixty-fourth Annual Report, 1901. (March 26.)

COMMERCIAL, No. 1 (1902).

Correspondence respecting the comparative merits of British, Belgian, and American Locomotives in Egypt, (April 3.)

EXPLOSIVES.

I. (Explosion of Nitro-Glycerine at Messrs. Nobel's factory at Ardeer, Ayrshire) — Report to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in one of the final washing-houses of the factory of Nobel's Explosives Company, Limited, at Ardeer, near Stevenston, Ayrshire, on the 9th January, 1902. (March 26.)

II. (Explosion at Messrs. Nobel's factory at Perranporth, Cornwall)—Report to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of partly-manufactured blasting gelatine, which occurred on the 16th January,

1902, at the factory of Nobel's Explosives Company, Limited, at Perranporth, Cornwall. (April 3.)

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1897.

Fourth Report of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Board to the Secretary for Scotland. (April 4.)

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twentieth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1901. Part I. General Report. (April 5).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Seventh Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1901. (April 5.)

SHIPBUILDING.

Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the arrears of shipbuilding. (April 9.)

CABLE COMMUNICATIONS.

Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Cable Communications. (April 9.)

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.

Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Prisons Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-third Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland. (April 9.)

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Return of the prices of agricultural products and live stock for the year 1901. (April 9.)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

Draft supplementary special Rules for the manufacture of earthenware and china which may be proposed by manufacturers giving certain undertakings as to the use of lead, etc. (April 9.)

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

I. Return for the month of January 1902. (April 9.)

II. Return for the month of February 1902. (April 9.)

CENSUS OF IRELAND.

I. Part I.—Vol. II. Province of Munster (County of Clare). (April 9.)

II. Part I.—Vol. IV. Province of Connaught (County of Leitrim). (April 9.)

PRESS TELEGRAMS (UNITED KINGDOM—NORWAY).

Agreement for the exchange of press telegrams, dated the 24th January–1st February, 1902, between the General Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the General Post Office of Norway. (April 10.)

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines and Quarries for the year 1901. (April 11.)

TREATY SERIES.

No. 6 (1902)—Treaty between the United Kingdom and the United States of America relative to the establishment of a communication by ship canal betweeen the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Signed at Washington, 18th November, 1901. [Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 21st February, 1902.] (March 25.)

No. 7 (1902)—Treaty between the United Kingdom and Belgium for the mutual surrender of fugitive criminals. Signed at Brussels, 29th October, 1901. [Ratifications exchanged at Brussels, 6th December, 1901.] (April 3.)

No. 8 (1902)—Agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany relative to the boundary of the British and German spheres of interest between Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika. Signed at Berlin, 23rd February, 1901.

No. 9 (1902)—Agreement additional to the Convention of 18th December, 1888, relative to the exchange of Money Orders between the United Kingdom and Belgium. Signed at London, 5th March, 1902. [Ratifications exchanged at London, 19th March, 1902.] (April 11.)

TRADE REPORTS.

I. Annual Series—

No. 2754. France (Havre). (March 26.)

No. 2755. United States (Baltimore). (April 3.)
No. 2756. Honduras. (April 3.)
No. 2757. Servia. (April 9.)
No. 2758. Germany (Colonial Estimates for 1902). (April 9.)
No. 2759. United States (Charleston). (April 9.)
No. 2760. Greece (Morea and the provinces of Acarnania and Actolia). (April 10.)
No. 2761. Netherlands (Amsterdam). (April 11.)
No. 2762. Austria-Hungary (Trieste). (April 12.)

II. Miscellaneous Series—
No. 575. Germany (Iron Trade in 1900 and 1901). (April 11.)

NATIONAL GALLERY, ETC., SCOTLAND.

Eighth Annual Report to the Secretary for Scotland by the Commissioners and Trustees of the Board of Manufacturers in Scotland for the year ending 30th September, 1901. (April 11.)

EGYPT, No. 1 (1902).

Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1901. (April 11.)

FISHERY STATISTICS.

Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the system of collecting fishery statistics in England and Wales, and to report how it could be improved and extended, together with minutes of evidence. (April 11.)

SOUTH AFRICA.

Report from Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen on the action that took place near Tweebosch on the 7th March, 1902. (April 11.)

EDINBURGH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Report, for the year 1901, by F. Grant-Ogilvie, Esq. (April 11.)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report, by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1901. (April 12.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) IRELAND.

Return for the year ended 31st December, 1901; Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889

1. Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrew's to the Secretary for Scotland under the provisions of the Act, for the year 1900-1901.

2. Abstract of Accounts for the University of Glasgow, for the year ended 30th September, 1901, being the Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University under the provisions of the Act.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Order in Council of 24th March, 1902, revoking certain Orders in Council approving Regulations relating to the lettering, numbering, and registering of British sea-fishing boats, and substituting Regulations in lieu thereof.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).

Draft rule proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of Brixton Prison.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27th and 28th Victoria, chap. 43. 45th and 46th Victoria, chap. 51, and 50th and 51st Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended 31st December, 1901.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS FROM PROVISIONS RESPECTING LIME WASHING, ETC.)

Order, dated 26th March, 1902, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 1, Sub-section (4) of the Factory and

Workshop Act, 1901, granting special exceptions from the provisions respecting lime washing, etc., in the case of electric generating works and frame dressing rooms of lace factories or lace warehouses under certain conditions.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to Eliza Hudson, a convict now under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting the said Eliza Hudson to be at large on condition that she enter the Elizabeth Fry Refuge, Hackney, E.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Statements of accounts, and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade under Section 10 of the "Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870," during the year ended 31st December, 1901.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

Charter of incorporation of the borough of Bexhill, dated 7th April, 1902.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 5th April, 1902, declaring that William Soames, assistant letter carrier, Post Office, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department.

GENERAL PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877.

Order in Council approving of Rules made by the General Prisons Board for the government of ordinary prisons in Ireland.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

1. Rules, dated 14th March, 1902, as to proceedings under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1889, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act (No. 2), 1901.

2. Rule, dated 14th March, 1902, as to temporary assistant commissioners.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament chargeable on the revenues of India outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1902, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, etc.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

I. Statutes made by the Governing Body of Jesus College, Cambridge, on the 16th day of December, 1901, amending Statutes VII and IX of the Statutes of the College.

II. Statute made by the Governing Body of Balliol College, Oxford, on the 10th day of December, 1901, amending Statute V of the Statutes of the College.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 37.)

LONDON WATER BILL.

Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Committee appointed by them to join with the Committee of this House to consider the London Water Bill do meet the Lords Committee in Committee Room A this day at two o'clock, as proposed by their Lordships.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide for the earlier closing of shops was presented by the Lord Avebury; read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 38.)

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House tomorrow.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next. — (*The Lord Raglan.*) (No. 39.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till Tomorrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 14th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BARKING GAS BILL.

Read the third time and passed.

CENTRAL ARGENTINE AND ROSARIO RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL ELECTRIC EXPRESS RAILWAY BILL.

As amended, considered; clauses added; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

WEST HAM GAS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

"For conferring further powers on the London United Tramways (1901), Limited, for constructing tramways and widening and altering roads in the counties of London, Middlesex, and Surrey; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL, ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

DUNDEE CORPORATION LIBRARIES ORDER CONFIRMATION.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Corporation Libraries (to be proceeded with under Section 7 of the Act), ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

DUNDEE CORPORATION LIBRARIES ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Corporation Libraries," presented accordingly; and, under 62 and 63 Vic., c. 47, s. 7 (2), ordered to be considered upon Monday next.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY).

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cohen and Mr John Burns.

PETITIONS.

BEER BILL.

Petition from West Ham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Crewe; Dover; Oswestry; New Quay (two); Glasgow; Doncaster; and Llanelly; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Lichfield, against; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Limerick, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Coatbridge; Selkirk; and Wishaw; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petition from Maidenhead, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Dover; Shanklin; Battersea; and Maidenhead; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition from Hawick, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Doncaster, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

Petition from Battersea, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Return [presented 11th April] to be printed. [No. 137.]

LOCAL TAXATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of final Report, so far as relates to Scotland, of His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Local Taxation [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of final Report, so far as relates to Ireland, of His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Local Taxation [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (INCORPORATION OF BEXHILL).

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Bexhill, dated 7th April, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th January — *Mr. David Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 138.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Jesus College, Cambridge, on 16th December, 1901, amending Statutes VII and IX of the statutes of that college [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 139.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Balliol College, Oxford, on 10th December, 1901, amending Statute V of the statutes of that college [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.]

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1902–3).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget." —(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 141.]

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "relating to Imperial Revenue (Collection and Expenditure) (Great Britain and Ireland), for the year ending 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 91 of Session 1901."—*Mr. Joseph A. Pease.*)

(3.35.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any communications, with a view to peace, have been received from the Boer leaders by the authorities in South Africa, and whether the Government have any statement to make as to their nature.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not think it is possible for us to go farther at the present

moment than to say that a message from the Boer leaders was communicated to us by Lord Kitchener on Saturday, that a reply has been sent to it, and that we are expecting a further communication.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I would further beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the uncertainties of the situation, and the strong hope of peace, it would not be wise to defer the making of any statement as to financial proposals which might have the effect of adding to the public burdens, and which in their nature must necessarily depend, to a great extent, on the results of the present events.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not think that the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman is one which can be complied with, for reasons which I shall explain when I make my statement.

Martial Law in Cape Colony—Case of Mr. Cartwright.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Mr. Albert Cartwright, now undergoing a sentence of imprisonment in Cape Colony under martial law, has applied to the Military authorities for permission, after the expiry of his term of imprisonment on 22nd April, to leave the Colony for England; and, if so, whether he stated in his application that he made it partly on grounds of health and partly on the necessity of earning a livelihood, for which he saw no opening in the Colony; and whether he has been informed that he will not be allowed to go to England.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Mr. Cartwright applied for permission to proceed to England, but the authorities in South Africa did not consider it desirable to grant it. His views, as the right hon. Gentleman is probably aware, are strongly anti-British, and it was not deemed desirable by the authorities in South Africa to increase the number of persons in this country who disseminate anti-British propaganda.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Are we to understand from the noble Lord that these tribunals administering martial law not only have the right of excluding militant Dutchmen from South Africa but also of banishing Englishmen from England?

LORD STANLEY: I have given to the right hon. Gentleman the answer my right hon. friend would have given if he had been able to be in his place. He is suffering from a chill in the throat which prevents him being here to answer Questions. At the same time I may say that the answer I have given has my right hon. friend's entire concurrence.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am very sorry to hear the cause of the right hon. Gentleman's absence. I shall put the Question in another form.

Imprisonment of Boer Suspects.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that letters have been received in this country from Mr. D. I. De Wet, written from the military camp, Matjesfontein, showing that he is imprisoned there, and that he states in one. dated 11th February, 1902, that in another five days it would be five months since he had been away and placed in that camp; whether he is aware that Mr. Du Plessis was deported last summer to Port Alfred; and, seeing that these Gentlemen are British subjects, and were peace delegates to England from the Graaf Reinet Congress, whether he can state the reason of their confinement, and whether they have been tried for any offence.

LORD STANLEY: Mr. D. I. De Wet has been detained in the military camp at Matjesfontein since 18th September for using seditious language and for furnishing rebels with information. Mr. P. L. Du Plessis was ordered to reside at Port Alfred in July last for omitting to report that rebellion was brewing in his ward; he admitted having used his influence against the formation of the district mounted troops. It appears that my reference to South Africa on this Question was previously misunderstood, and that the answer that these persons had not been interfered with had reference to

their mission to England. The offences mentioned above were subsequent to their return and caused action to be taken.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Have the charges on which they are imprisoned been communicated to them, because their letters say they are not aware of them?

LORD STANLEY: I do not know what may have been stated in letters.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: That is not my Question. I ask whether the charges on which these gentlemen are imprisoned have been communicated to them, and I ask this because they themselves say they do not know the charges.

LORD STANLEY: I cannot say.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I must further ask the noble Lord whether, seeing that these gentlemen are men of consideration —[Laughter]—certainly as worthy of consideration as any Member sitting on the opposite side of this House—whether he will make inquiries whether they have been furnished with the charges against them.

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. My right hon. friend has implicit confidence in Lord Kitchener's discretion, and is not prepared to interfere with it.

Medical Comforts for the Boers.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether General Delarey made a request of Lord Kitchener, either immediately before or shortly after the release of Lord Methuen, to allow medicines and bandages to be forwarded through the British lines by friends of the Boers; and, if so, whether he can state what was Lord Kitchener's reply to that request.

LORD STANLEY: I have no information as to the request alluded to.

MR. FLYNN: I gave three days notice. Has the noble Lord applied for information?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

Glasgow Postal Volunteers for Active Service.

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that the Post Office Circular of the 18th March last contained a notice to telegraphists inviting applications for vacancies in the postal service of the Transvaal Colony, he will explain why, with this circular, a notice was posted in the Telegraph Department of the Glasgow Post Office intimating that the circular notice did not apply to the Glasgow Office; whether the Postmaster General is aware that many telegraphists at Glasgow are anxious to join the Transvaal service, and what is the reason for their being debarred from applying for vacancies.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The notice intimating that the circular notice in question did not apply to the Glasgow Office was posted because, as stated in the House last Tuesday, so many officers from the Glasgow Office have gone to South Africa in different capacities that the exigencies of the service rendered it impossible to allow more to go at present.

British Telegraphists at the Front.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been brought to his notice that forty-two British telegraphists volunteered for service with the Royal Engineers in May, 1900, for a period of twelve months or till the end of the war, in answer to the call for recruits for the 24th Middlesex Field Army Post Office; and seeing that while other Volunteers have been allowed to return, these men are not being relieved, whether he can see his way to either relieve these men or reward them for their prolonged service in South Africa.

LORD STANLEY: My attention has been drawn to the case of these men. Every effort has been made to relieve them, but owing to the increase in the number of telegraphists required in South Africa, it has been found impossible to spare them so far. I must remind the hon. Member that they are in receipt of full civil salary in addition to their military pay.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Seeing that these men have been treated differently from other men will they receive any special reward for this prolonged service?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

Highland Regiments—Jackets and Kilts.

MR. NICOL (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to discontinue the issue of the white jacket to the Highland Regiments and to restrict the use of the kilt.

LORD STANLEY · As regards the kilt I must refer the hon. Member to the reply given in the House on Friday last.† The retention of the white jacket is under consideration.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the regulation prohibiting the use of the kilt by Highland regiments has the sanction of Lord Roberts.

LORD STANLEY: The kilt is not prohibited.

MR. WEIR: Where can a copy of the new regulation be seen? Can it be furnished to the House?

LORD STANLEY: The kilt is not prohibited.

MR. WEIR: I understand that a new regulation has been issued. Has it been approved by Lord Roberts, and where can it be seen?

LORD STANLEY did not reply.

MR. WEIR: May I press for an answer?

* MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member had better give notice of the Question in the usual way.

Remounts—Depôts in Canada.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can now state what answer has been returned to the Province of Ontario and the North-West Province of Canada in reply to their application that Government remount depôts may be established in those provinces.

LORD STANLEY: No such applications have been received at the War Office.

MR. MALCOLM: Do I understand that neither directly nor indirectly has any such application been received from Canada?

LORD STANLEY: Not from the Government.

Canned Provision Contracts.

MR. MALCOLM: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, whether he can state the numbers of canned provision contracts for the Field Force in South Africa held respectively by Canadian and American firms.

LORD STANLEY: Fifty-one Canadian and a hundred and one American contracts have been made since the beginning of the war.

MR. MALCOLM: When was the last contract made?

LORD STANLEY: I think some are being made at the present moment, but I will inquire.

Anti-Typhoid Inoculation.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the report on the results of anti-typhoid inoculation has been received; and, if so, will he say whether it shows a diminution in mortality in the inoculated attacked by the disease as compared with the uninoculated; whether it shows a diminished evidence of the disease in inoculated; and whether the full report will now be laid upon the Table.

LORD STANLEY: The report has been received. It deals with only 4,138 cases and the aggregate results show a mortality of 8.2 per cent. in inoculated persons as against 15.1 per cent. in uninoculated. The report, however, does

† See page 13 of this volume.

not appear sufficiently conclusive in itself, and it seems expedient to obtain further statistics from the Admission and Discharge Books before publishing it.

CAPTAIN NORTON: The noble Lord has not answered the last paragraph of the Question.

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir, it will not be laid.

Army Canteen Committee.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state how many officers of the infantry of the line are members of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Army Canteen business, and how many members of this Committee were at one time members of the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society; whether there is any intention upon the part of the Government of taking over the above-mentioned society as the nucleus of a future general scheme of Army Canteen Co-operative Supply; and whether, in the event of it being decided to establish a society for the supply of the troops, he will consider the advisability of it being started as a new concern after a Committee of the leading commercial men in the country, and officers of the longest and widest experience in Army canteen management have carefully considered the matter in all its aspects.

LORD STANLEY: This Committee is composed as follows—

Earl Grey, *President.*
Major-General Eaton, Grenadier Guards.
Colonel Bridge, Army Service Corps.
Colonel Lambert, 2nd Dragoon Guards.
Major Stopford, Irish Guards.
Captain Boehmer, late East Surrey Regiment.
George Harwood, Esq., M.P.
Colonel Barrington Foote, R.A., *Secretary.*

Major Stopford served previously in the Derby Regiment for eighteen years. None of the above-mentioned are members of the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society or have had any financial interest in it. Colonel Bridge served at one time on the Society's Committee of management which is unpaid. I am not prepared at present, pending the receipt of the Committee's Report, to discuss the other points raised in the Question.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Then am I to understand that there is only one infantry of the line officer represented in the entire Committee?

LORD STANLEY: If the hon. Gentleman looks at the list he will find he is entirely wrong. The Grenadier Guards is an infantry regiment.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Of the line?

LORD STANLEY: Then there is Captain Beecher, late of the East Surrey regiment, and Major Stopford of the Irish Guards who previously served for eighteen years in the Derbyshire regiment and may well be considered to represent the infantry of the line.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Still am I not right in my contention that there is only one officer belonging to the infantry of the line on the Committee?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Waltham Royal Gunpowder Factory.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that the chargemen and workmen at the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham have to strip and hang up their clothes together, and thus render it possible for a man coming in on a later shift to plant a match in some person's pocket, either for spite, or in order to get rid of an incriminating match brought in by accident; whether he will take steps to prevent the occurrence of such a thing in future by providing each man with a locker or chest with a padlock attached; and whether he will consider the possibility of making some compensation to persons discharged through mistakes of this kind by finding them employment in a Government factory where their services would count, or by the gratuity usually given to discharged persons on reduction of staff.

LORD STANLEY: As men are not searched for matches when going out, it is not apparent what object would be gained by the transfer of matches suggested. The provision of chests would necessitate a considerable increase in the size of the shifting rooms which I am not prepared to undertake. Men discharged for coming to work in danger areas with matches are not blacklisted, so that there is nothing to prevent their obtaining suitable employment elsewhere, but I cannot consent to find employment for persons discharged for a breach of the regulations.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Will the noble Lord give me an interview on this matter?

LORD STANLEY: Certainly.

Woolwich Arsenal—Reduction of Working Staff.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that although there have been over 1,000 dismissals and suspensions of workmen at Woolwich Arsenal recently, there has been no reduction in the numbers of the foremen or of the official staff generally; and whether he will state what steps he proposes to take in this matter. I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether, while reductions are being made in the working staff at Woolwich Arsenal, and plant there is consequently standing idle, increasing quantities of Government work are being given to private contractors; and whether, in order to induce such contractors to tender for the work, the Government has given them guarantees or promises of future employment of their plant for some years to come.

LORD STANLEY: In reply to the first Question, I am aware of the facts stated, and I do not propose to take any steps in the matter. In reply to the second Question, during the recent pressure increased quantities of work were given to the Ordnance Factories, who, therefore, took on extra men, and to contractors. As the work has now diminished less work is being given to both, and the extra men are being discharged from the Ordnance Factories. No guarantee has been given by the Government, but, in accordance with settled policy, a portion of the work is always given to the trade. It is not desirable to continue working the Ordnance Factories to their fullest power of production.

Woolwich Factories—Sales of Ashes.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will explain why ashes from the brass foundry and rolling mills of the Royal Laboratory and other factories at Woolwich are sold at £6 2s. 6d. per ton; will he state what are the component parts of such ashes which give them so high a value; and will he cause such changes to be made in the processes producing the ashes as will prevent such waste for the future.

LORD STANLEY: The ashes are being sold at £6 7s. 6d. and £7 7s. 6d. a ton. They contain some splashes of metal, the larger of which are recovered. It would be expensive to pick it all out and reduce it. There is no waste, as there is every reason to believe that the fair value of the stuff is obtained.

MR. CAINE: Is the noble Lord aware that in every ton there is at least 2 cwt. of brass waste?

[No answer was returned.]

Pewsey Roads—Damage by War Office Contractors.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE Wiltshire, Cricklade): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to a statement made by the district surveyor of the Pewsey (Wiltshire) District Council on the 24th of March at a meeting of that council, viz., that it cost £3,152 in the district to repair the damage done by the contractors to the War Office to the roads of the district; that this expense could have been almost entirely saved had the War Office specified that all material should be conveyed to the nearest railway station to Bulford Camp, viz., Porton or Grately, instead of to Ludgershall, which was several miles from the camp, and that had this been

done £500 would have covered the damage; and will he explain why the arrangement was made to deliver the materials at Ludgershall instead of at the nearest station, and if the War Office has accepted liability for the above sum of £3,152 or part of it, as damages for extraordinary traffic.

LORD STANLEY: The sum of £2,042 has been paid to the Pewsey District Council in respect of damage to roads of the district alleged to have been caused by extraordinary military traffic, and a further claim is at present under consideration. It is not usual to specify a particular route by which a contractor shall bring his goods to the site of a proposed work, and no particular route was specified in this case. The contractor was subject to heavy time penalties, and doubtless chose the route most convenient and most expeditious under the circumstances.

Lord Charles Beresford and Naval Organisation.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a statement by Rear Admiral Lord Charles Beresford that the fleet is not properly organised and prepared for war, and is therefore unable to act immediately if called upon; whether this statement is consistent with Admiralty regulations; and whether he has taken or proposes to take any action in consequence of it.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The attention of the Admiralty has been called to the statement referred to, and it is to be regretted that a false impression may be created by it. The Fleet in case of war could act immediately. There is not, and never can be, finality in organisation for war. The improvement and perfecting of that organisation continuously occupies the attention of the Admiralty, and is the special responsibility and main function of the Senior Naval Lord. The interests of discipline do not require that the discretion of officers on half-pay should be regulated to the extent which is necessary in the case of officers on Active Service, who come under the Naval Discipline Act.

Naval Coal Supplies in the Mediterranean.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether a letter was received by the Admiralty from the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Station, covering a letter addressed to him by his second in command, in which the latter expressed anxiety at the shortage of coal in the Mediterranean; whether this shortage existed; if so, who was the official responsible for it, and what steps have been taken to remedy it.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, all communications received from Commanders-in-Chief must be regarded as absolutely confidential. I am not, therefore, prepared to make any statement as to the contents of communications of this character. The Admiralty desire, however, to afford the House all information in respect of the coal supply to the Fleet which can be given consistently with the interests of the public service. The stock of coal in the Mediterranean—including in that term the current supply to the Fleet and the Reserve—has always been fixed by the Admiralty in communication with the Commander in-Chief, and there has been no shortage from the authorised standard within recent years. Early in 1900 the Admiralty, in communication with the officers locally responsible for the maintenance of the supply, namely the Commander-in-Chief and the Admiral Superintendent at Malta, decided that the authorised Reserve was becoming insufficient owing to the increase in the size and I.H.P. of the Mediterranean Fleet. An increase was approved on the 5th February, and since that time the stock has been steadily and greatly augmented, and a new standard fixed. An increase of the stock, however, is no simple matter. Coal, if long stored, deteriorates rapidly, especially if not under cover, and it cannot be stacked more than a certain height without risk of combustion, for which reasons, the Admiralty two years ago decided to adopt patent fuel largely for part of these reserves; moreover, neither coal nor patent fuel can be advantageously or economically stacked except in close

proximity to deep water. Much additional storage ground has had, therefore, to be acquired or created at Malta and Gibraltar. This has been continuously done since the autumn of 1899, with the result that the stock has been greatly increased, and full provision was made in the Naval Works Loan Act of 1901, in respect of any further requirements of storage ground, and all accessories.

MR. NORMAN: Arising out of that answer, Sir, will the hon. Gentleman say whether, when such confidential statements have been made in responsible quarters, the Admiralty think it desirable to take action upon them or not?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That depends entirely on the nature of the communication.

MR. NORMAN: I meant the statement in my Question.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Whether it is the statement referred to in the Question or not, the same answer applies. The action of the Admiralty depends on the nature of the communication and the authority of the person making it.

MR. NORMAN: The hon. Gentleman has not answered my first supplementary Question, whether the Admiralty propose to take any action in this specific case in consequence of this particular charge.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Action was taken, not in consequence of the statement, but prior to it. The results are now being seen.

Coronation Naval Review—Members' Visits to War Ships.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will arrange, on the day previous to or succeeding the proposed Naval Review at Spithead, in connection with the Coronation, for such Members of Parliament as desire to visit the various classes of warships belonging to this, and any foreign country that may take part in the review.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Admiralty cannot make any arrangements with regard to foreign ships, but every facility will be given to hon. Members desiring to visit His Majesty's ships on the occasion of the Coronation review. If a sufficient number of Members desire to visit any special ship or ships, arrangements will be made for their convenience, and I shall be glad if hon. Members will communicate with me in respect to the matter.

MR. LOUGH: Is it not possible to make arrangements for visiting foreign ships?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not think the Admiralty could undertake that responsibility.

Maximite.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any report has been made to the Lords of the Admiralty as to the new explosive called Maximite; if so, can he give the results reported, and state whether the Admiralty have acquired the right to use it.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Reports have been received of the results of experiments carried out in America. They have been referred to the Explosives Committee, who are carrying out experiments with various high explosives, the results of which are not published.

Coal for the Navy—Experiments with Mixed Coals.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state what was the nature of the experiments carried out by the Admiralty with anthracite and Scotch coal mixed, what were the proportions used of each kind in these experiments, and what was the calorific value determined by the engineers during these trials of the combination of such coals; also, whether similar experiments were carried out with north country coal; and, if so, what were the results obtained therefrom.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I cannot ascertain that experiments have actually been made with anthracite and Scottish coal in combination. Welsh smokeless coal has been tried on many occasions

in combination with various qualities of bituminous coal, but the result has not been satisfactory. Experiments with anthracite are in contemplation, and I think trials may with advantage be made of the results obtainable with anthracite in combination with bituminous coal, including Scotch coal.

Irrigation Works in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff's Commission has already made progress in its investigations of existing projects for water supply in India; whether provision can be made for a larger allocation of funds for that purpose out of the Budget's surplus; and whether it is the intention of the Local Governments of Bombay and Madras to proceed without delay with the construction of such water works, tanks, dams, or embankments as can be provided by the provincial funds at their disposal.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Irrigation Commission has not, I believe, submitted any Report, and its investigations will not be completed for about a year. In the meantime the Government of India have in their Budget made a special allotment to Local Governments for minor works, as they are of opinion that in this way the most direct and immediate benefit is likely to be realised; and that the larger schemes which they have in view require careful consideration, and should not be hurriedly undertaken. This allotment will be used by the Local Governments without delay.

Government Grog Shops at Assam.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to a statement in the twenty-sixth half-yearly Report of the Bishnath Tea Company, Limited, Assam, which said that fifty-one deaths occurred in the gardens of the company during the half-year, including several deaths from excessive drinking at the Government grog shops; is he aware that the Commissioner of Excise for Assam, in his last published Report, 1901, says in paragraph 8 that the consumption of country spirits shows a net increase of 7.37 per cent. over the previous year, and in paragraph 11 that endeavours were again made by the Department to settle country spirit shops on tea gardens; and that the total excise revenue of the province was the highest figure yet attained; and, seeing that the excise revenues of Assam have increased 35 per cent. during the last ten years, and that the Tea Planters' Association have made repeated protests against the way in which the Government force liquor shops upon them, will he state what steps are being taken, if any, to remedy this growing consumption of liquor.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have not seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers in the first part of his Question. The Excise Commissioner's Report states that the increase of 7.37 per cent. does not relate to the consumption of spirits, but to the revenue, and that the Commissioner states that it was due to keener competition at the auction sales of licences. Country-made spirits are consumed in Assam almost exclusively by the immigrant coolies, and the consumption, as well as the revenue, must tend to rise with their numbers. On the suggestion of the Assam branch of the Tea Association, attempts have for many years been made to get the planters to take control of the liquor shops already existing in the vicinity of their gardens. I consider this plan likely to conduce to good order and sobriety, and I am not aware that any protests have been made against it by the Tea Planters' Association. Any complaints as to the location or the management of liquor shops have received, and will continue to receive, prompt attention.

MR. CAINE: Is there any necessity whatever for forcing these shops on the planters who do not want them?

LORD G. HAMILTON: My information is that they are wanted.

Plague in the Punjab.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, can he state how many deaths from plague have occurred daily in the Punjab; and whether the

recommendations of the Plague Commission, with regard to securing the co-operation of the people in administering plague measures which were followed in the Bombay Presidency, are being adopted in the Punjab.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I receive no daily returns of plague deaths. The telegraphic reports are for periods of four weeks, and these are subsequently supplemented by certain weekly returns and details. The numbers of plague deaths in the Punjab since the autumn of 1901 have, I regret to say greatly increased, and are as follows—

For the four weeks ending 18th Jan. 1902 - - - -	9,438
For the four weeks ending 15th Feb. 1902 - - - -	16,784
For the four weeks ending 15th March 1902 - - - -	42,788

No later reports have yet been received. Regulations enjoining measures based on the recommendations of the Plague Commission and designed to avoid coercion and to attract the co-operation of the people as much as possible, have been adopted, and a specially qualified medical officer has been deputed to supervise the preventive arrangements.

Army Service in India.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state in what public document the War Office have given an interpretation of Section 87 of the Army Act, justifying the recent order of the Commander-in-Chief in India that 7 years service becomes 8¼ years, 12 years service becomes 13¼, and 21 years service becomes 22¼; and whether the words giving power to prolong the service for such further period not exceeding twelve months as the competent military authority, may order, are in practice construed as subject to a further addition of three months under the words directing discharge with all convenient speed.

LORD STANLEY: In reply to the first paragraph, the public documents are the Royal Proclamation continuing soldiers in Army Service and Army Order 184 of 1899 giving effect thereto. It has been decided that three months should be adopted as the limit of convenient speed, and that after that compensation should be granted in accordance with the terms of Army Order 210 of 1901.

Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, under the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, the Government is empowered to conclude a general alliance on the part of Great Britain with any other European or American Power without prior consultation with or consent of Japan.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The only provision of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement which has reference to the point raised in the hon. Member's Question is Article IV. If the hon. Member will refer to that Article he will see that its language is perfectly clear.

Motor Cars—Speed Regulations.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can say what public body has authority to regulate the speed of moter cars in the streets and suburbs of London; what is the maximum speed permitted, and what steps, if any, are taken to prevent excessive speed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The answer to the first Question is the Local Government Board, and to the second, twelve miles an hour, or such lower speed as is reasonable and proper, having regard to the traffic on the highway, and will not endanger the life or limb of any person or be to the common danger of passengers. The police are under detailed instructions to check furious or reckless driving by strict enforcement of the law.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Are the drivers registered, licensed, or required to pass any test of efficiency?

MR. RITCHIE: I believe not.

A further Question by Mr. FREEMAN THOMAS (Hastings), should, said Mr. RITCHIE, be addressed to the Local Government Board.

MR. FLYNN: Is it not the fact that on the roads leading to London many of these cars go at fifty miles per hour.

[No answer was returned.]

North Sea Fisheries.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state what is the exact present position as to any international conventions, agreements, or conferences touching the North Sea Fisheries; does the Government propose to take any, and, if so, what steps, independently, with a view to the preservation of such fisheries.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): His Majesty's Government have agreed to take part in the international scheme of investigation connected with fishery problems in the North Sea and adjacent waters as proposed by the Conferences held at Stockholm and Christiania, and Parliament will be asked to make a grant to defray the cost of the British share of these investigations. These funds will be administered by a Departmental Committee with the advice of scientific experts. The details of the investigations will no doubt be finally settled at the forthcoming meeting of the International Council at Copenhagen, at which Great Britain will be represented, but the date of which has not yet been fixed. The Board of Trade have also appointed a Committee under Minute dated 13th August, 1901, to inquire and report as to the best means by which the State or Local Authorities can assist Scientific Research as applied to problems affecting the fisheries of Great Britain and Ireland, and in particular whether the object in view would best be attained by the creation of one central body or department acting for England, Scotland, and Ireland, or by means of separate departments or agencies in each of the three countries. Quite apart from this important question of Scientific Research the Board of Trade have, with the assistance of another Committee, considered how the present system of collecting fisheries statistics in England and Wales could be improved and extended. That Committee has already made a report. The Board of Trade have acted upon it and made certain arrangements which they hope will be beneficial to the interests concerned.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Board of Trade intends to take any independent action to arrest the depletion of our North Sea Fisheries apart from the Conference?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No such independent action is at present contemplated.

MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster): Were the interests of Great Britain represented at the second Conference directly?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): Is the right hon. Gentleman in consultation with the Scottish Fishery Board in regard to this matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, I am.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table the Report of the Committee, which he states he has already received, as to the investigation.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: So far as I am aware, there will be no objection. I may add I am in communication with the Scottish Office, not directly with the Scottish Fishery Board.

Current Rate of Wages for Skilled Labour.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state in what districts of England the current rate of wages for skilled labourers is no higher than 16s. or 17s. per week.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: If the hon. Member will specify the particular classes of labourers whose rates of wages he wishes to know, any information in the possession of the Board of Trade shall be placed at his disposal. The term "skilled labourers" is too vague to enable an answer to be given to the Question.

Tottington Workhouse Children.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been callen to a meeting of the Leigh Board of Guardians, held on 3rd April, at which allegations were made as to the ill-treatment of workhouse children at Tottington, and when it was stated that, out of 230 children in the school, only 84 were free from disease; whether industrial schools are subject to surprise visits from the Local Government Board inspectors, besides the annual formal visit of which notice is given; if not, whether he will institute such visits; and whether he proposes to take any action with regard to the school at Tottington.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I have already made some investigations with regard to the allegations concerning the children sent by the Leigh Board of Guardians to the school at Tottington, and I have decided to direct an Inquiry on oath to be held on the subject. Schools certified under the Poor Law Certified Schools Act, 1862, may be visited any time by a Local Government Board Inspector at any time. Notice of such visits is not required, and is not usually given.

Smallpox in Essex.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a patient suffering from smallpox is now being treated in a fever hospital within a few yards of a public road between Hedingham and Halstead, in Essex; and whether he will take steps to secure the better isolation of the patient.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am informed that by arrangement between the Halstead Urban and Rural District Councils, the hospital of the latter Council at Castle Hedingham has been exclusively reserved for the reception of any smallpox cases occurring in the district of either authority, any other infectious cases in the two districts being received in the hospital of the Urban District Council. Recently, a mild case of smallpox was, in accordance with this arrangement, removed to the Castle Hedingham Hospital, where it is still under treatment. I understand that this hospital is twenty yards from a highway, and is in a very isolated position—the nearest dwelling being 300 yards distant. The District Councils concerned consider that the arrangement adopted is the best that could be made in the circumstances; and at present I see no reason for dissenting from their view.

Government Departments and County Councils—Transference of Powers.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any transfer to the County Councils of powers of certain Government Departments and other authorities has been made by his Department under the provisions of Section 10 of the Local Government Act, 1888, and particularly whether any powers have been transferred, under sub-Section 3 of Clause 10, to the County Councils of two or more counties jointly, to be exercised and discharged by a joint committee of such councils; whether there has been any demand on the part of County Councils, either in England or Wales, to have any of the powers exercised by Government Departments transferred to themselves; and if he has any official reports indicating that the attitude of the non-county boroughs has materially changed since 1889 in respect of such transfer.

MR. WALTER LONG: The answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the negative, and to the second in the affirmative. In 1898, a Departmental Committee, which had been appointed to consider, amongst other matters, how far it would be possible to devolve on County Councils certain work done by the Local Government Board, reported that the hostility of the non-county boroughs, and of the majority of the Urban Councils, to the transfer of any further powers to the County Councils, and their preference for the control of the central authority were declared, by the witnesses examined on behalf of these authorities, to be stronger even than they were in 1889.

* MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will

state generally what powers and duties he has the right to transfer to Welsh County Councils under Clause 10 of the Local Government Act of 1888.

MR. WALTER LONG: A Provisional Order made by the Local Government Board under the section mentioned may transfer any of the powers and duties referred to in sub-Section (1) of the section, provided that the draft is approved by the Government Department or body whose powers or duties would be affected. As the law now stands, however, any transfer under the section must be made to County Councils in England and Wales generally, and it would not be practicable to limit it to Welsh County Councils only.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES: My Question has not been answered. I want to know generally, what powers and duties can be transferred to County Councils?

MR. WALTER LONG: And I have told the hon. Gentleman that any transfer can only be made generally, and not to individual County Councils.

Government Workmen and the Coronation.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether arrangements will be made to pay the wages of all workmen employed by the Government for the two holidays at the Coronation; and whether the Government will use its influence with all contractors employed by them to secure that this example is generally followed.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): With regard to the first part of the hon. Member's Question that matter is under consideration; but with reference to the second paragraph, I cannot undertake to interfere between contractors and their men.

Members and the Coronation.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he can state what facilities will be afforded to Members to see the Coronation procession with members of their family, whether in the precincts of the House or elsewhere.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: It is proposed to provide the same facilities to view the Royal progress on June 27th as were afforded to hon. Members and the Officials of the House on the occasion of the Jubilee in 1897. The actual site of the stands has not yet been decided upon. The hon. Baronet is no doubt aware that on the day of the Coronation seats will be provided in Westminster Abbey for Members and their wives.

Carloway and Stornoway Road.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet considered the expediency of providing funds for the construction of the middle section of the road between Carloway and Stornoway: and, if not, will he explain why the Government decline to take the necessary steps to secure the completion of this road.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative; and that to the second is that the advantage to be gained does not seem to be commensurate with the outlay involved.

Dog Tax in Scotland and Ireland.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, seeing that 2s. 6d. only is paid for dog tax in Ireland, will he consider the advisability of reducing the tax to 2s. 6d. in Scotland: and will he state the amount derived from this tax in Scotland and Ireland respectively.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Quesion raised by the hon. Member is one that principally affects, not the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the local authorities, as both in Scotland and Ireland the proceeds of these licences are devoted to local purposes. In the year ended 31st March, 1901, dog licences in Scotland produced £42,459. The Irish tax is a police licence, and I cannot say how much it yields.

Parcels Post Regulations.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton): I beg to ask the Secretary to

the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in the event of a parcel deposited with a post office for delivery being lost, and the postal authorities being able to trace such parcel through one stage or another of their system, he will provide that this should be deemed sufficient proof of depositing with them; and whether, under such circumstances, compensation will be made to the owner of the parcel so lost.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: One of the published conditions governing the payment of compensation in respect of parcels lost in the post is that a certificate of posting shall be produced when required. But this condition is not insisted on when the particulars which a certificate of posting would have proved are established by other satisfactory evidence.

Parcels Posts Receipts.

COLONEL PILKINGTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in consideration of the increasing number of parcels carried by the Post Office, the Postmaster General will inaugurate some simple system of giving receipts for all parcels deposited at post offices for delivery.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Certificates of posting, prepared by the county officers, are already given for all parcels on which a special fee is paid for registration, and in the case of unregistered parcels anyone bringing a parcel to post can obtain a certificate of posting if he will fill up one of the forms provided for the purpose, and present it to the counter clerk. To give a certificate for every unregistered parcel, whether required or not, would involve considerable labour, and the Postmaster General does not think that the circumstances are such as to call for a modification of the present practice, which is advertised in paragraph 8, p. 8 of the Post Office Guide.

Civil Service Clerks—Retirement Rules.

MR TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the statements made by the Secretary to the Treasury on 16th May, 1901, and 26th July, 1901, that legislation would be necessary to make the Order in Council based on the Report of the Ridley Commission applicable to the clerks of the several divisions of the High Court, and, considering the opinion expressed by the Judge of the Probate Court in common with the late Lord Herschell in favour of retiring rules working automatically, His Majesty's Government propose to initiate such legislation during the present session.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir.

Free Medical Attendance for Postal Servants.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will explain why sub-office rural postmen, who are not allowed free medical attendance, are compelled to furnish the Department with a weekly medical certificate when they are on the sick list at their own cost; and whether the Department will dispense with weekly certificates in cases where the men's illness is known to be of several weeks duration; also whether the Department can see its way to refund to the men the cost of these certificates.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: All servants of the Department are required to furnish weekly certificates when absent through illness, and at places where there is no medical officer attached to the Post Office the certificates must be obtained from the patient's own medical adviser. The Postmaster General is not prepared to alter the rule which requires medical certificates to be furnished, nor can he undertake to refund the cost of them to those officers who are obliged to obtain them at their own expense.

Teachers' Register.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether the names of teachers who possess a certificate under the Code of Regulations for Elementary day Schools, but no further certificate, and who are now teaching in recognised schools, not being Elementary Schools, will be placed on column A of the Register of Teachers.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): Column A will contain the names of all persons for the time being recognised by the Board as Certificated Teachers under the Code of Regulations for Elementary Day Schools.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the names of teachers who are, and for the past three years have been engaged in recognised schools not being elementary schools, and who possess not only a certificate recognised under the Elementary Day Schools Code, but also a university degree or some other diploma included in Appendix A and B of the Order in Council relating to the Registration of Teachers. will appear in both columns A and B of the Register.

SIR J. GORST: If a teacher holds a certificate under the Elementary Day School Code and can also comply with the conditions of admission to column B, there is nothing to prevent his name appearing on both columns.

New Education Bill—Probable Cost of Working.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, S. Molton): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state what is the approximate annual expenditure for elementary education which the local authorities will require to incur, in addition to the present expenditure, for efficiently working the new Education Bill.

SIR J. GORST: No, I am afraid it is impossible at present to make any estimate that could be relied on.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he will lay upon the Table lists of the non-county municipal boroughs in England and Wales having a population of over 10,000, and of urban districts having a population of over 20,000; and whether he will also lay upon the Table copies of the Acts set forth in the Fourth Schedule to the Education Bill (except those proposed to be wholly repealed) showing the effect of the proposed legislation: and whether section 13 (1) (d) of the Education Bill will compel the local authority to charge on the area which formed the school district any liabilities by them in respect of that area after the transfer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards the first part of the Question, I shall be able to lay the statistics referred to on the Table of the House, though they may be easily extracted from the preliminary Report of the census of 1901. I do not think we can carry out the request of the hon. Gentleman with regard to the schedule of the Bill in the form in which he makes it, but I will consider how far it is possible to furnish a memorandum explanatory of the repeals effected by the schedule. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, the effect of the Bill as presented is to leave existing liabilaties upon the areas which are at the present moment bearing the charge, and to charge any future liability of the kind in the counties upon the parish or parishes served by the schools.

Labourers' Cottages in County Antrim.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland wh is at the amount of the share of County Antrim in the residue of the Exchequer contribution applicable towards the cost of providing labourers' cottages under the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts, and what is the share respectively of the rural districts of Aghalee, Antrim, Ballycastle, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Belfast No. 1, Larne, and Lisburn No. 1 in this amount.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The share of the County Antrim in the grant is £12,321 9s. 2d. No cottages were completed in the county during the year ended 29th September last, consequently no rural district is entitled to participate in the grant.

Conolly Estate, Ballyshannon.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state approximately the date on which

the Conolly Estate, Ballyshannon, will be sold to the tenants, who are about to become purchasers of their holdings under the fortieth section of The Irish Land Act, 1896, the land judge having requested the Land Commission upwards of a year ago to have the estate valued with a view to the sale thereof to the tenants; whether he is aware that the receiver and solicitor having carriage of the sale applied for the adjournment of the hearing of applications by tenants on this estate to have fair rents fixed at the last sitting of the Land Commission in Ballyshannon, on the ground that the fixing of rents would delay the sale; and, whether any measures will be taken to expedite the sale to the tenants of this estate.

MR. WYNDHAM: The inspection of this estate has presented many difficulties owing to the numerous subdivisions and the nature of the tenancies. It is expected, however, that the inspection will be completed before the end of May. Every expedition will be used to conclude the preliminary steps at as early a date as possible, but it is not possible to state, even approximately, when this event will be reached. Several fair rent applications were adjourned for the reason stated.

Irish National School Teachers' Salaries.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 8th February last the Commissioners of National Education ordered payment of salary to be made to the second assistant in Roll No. 1754, National School, District 33, for services rendered in the year ended 31st December last; and will he explain why this teacher has not yet been paid the amount to which he is entitled.

MR. WYNDHAM: The teacher's claim for salary in this case having been found to be excessive the Inspector was directed to visit the school and report. On his recommendation some deductions were made for absences. The balance has been remitted to the manager.

Irish Illicit Stills—Constable's Disguises.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that on 20th March, Constable Dunleavy, of Pontoon, Castlebar, County Mayo, went about the country in the guise of a pedlar selling jewellery; is it usual for, and is a constable acting within his right in assuming such a character; has he had any complaints from the inhabitants of the district in which this constable is stationed that he, on 20th March, endeavoured to induce several of them to establish illicit stills; and will he cause a sworn inquiry to be held into the allegations against Constable Dunleavy and other constables of the same and neighbouring police stations that they, on several occasions, endeavoured to induce persons to establish illicit stills.

MR. WYNDHAM: The County Inspector, who has made personal inquiry into this matter, informs me that the allegations made in the Question are absolutely without foundation.

Irish Railway Workers and the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that railway permanent waymen and milesmen are not entitled to labourers' cottages and allotments of land under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; and, seeing that they are labourers will he consider their case in the proposed legislation for the better housing of the working classes in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: The suggestion in the Question will be considered. I am inclined to think, however, that the housing of men employed on a railway is more properly a matter for consideration by their employers, the Railway Company.

Petitions under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that petitions under the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts involving important issues were heard at the meetings of the Privy

Council on Wednesday and Thursday last, he will lay copies of the evidence and decisions in each case upon the Table of the House for the information of hon. Members.

MR. WYNDHAM: These inquiries under the Labourers' Acts are always open to the public. No useful purpose, commensurate with the great expense that would be involved, could be served by laying on the Table the voluminous evidence taken at the Inquires, and I am unable, therefore, to accede to the hon. Members' request. The decisions arrived at by the Privy Council in the particular cases mentioned will be published in the Gazette, and otherwise promulgated to the parties concerned.

Treatment of Crimes Act (Ireland) Prisoners.

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the hon. Member for South Mayo, and Mr. Denis Johnston, who are at present confined in Tullamore Prison, under Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act sentences of four and five months respectively, are obliged to exercise in the ring with ordinary prisoners; and whether he will consider the advisability of relaxing the prison rules so as to permit Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Johnston to take exercise apart from the common prisoners.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the published statement of the hon. Member for North Mayo (as an expert) to his constituents that the moral tone in these institutions is much superior to that in this House?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not seen the observation, and in any case I am not prepared to draw invidious distinctions. The sentences of imprisonment without hard labour passed on the hon. Member for South Mayo and Mr. Johnston will respectively expire on the 16th instant and 14th May. After that they are condemned respectively to two months and three months as first-class misdemeanants. Under the first sentences they are, I am informed, exercised with prisoners belonging to the classes in which they have been placed. Under the second sentences, they will not be exercised with other prisoners.

MR. DELANY: Why is this treatment given specially to these men?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that under the Coercion Act of 1887, those of us who were imprisoned were after a certain period exempted from taking exercise in company with ordinary criminals?

MR. WYNDHAM: There is perhaps some misunderstanding as to the term "ordinary criminals." Prisoners are, under the rules which have been laid on the Table of the House, divided into three categories. Those rules are being put in force in this case. I am not aware of any special exemption such as has been suggested by the hon. Member, but if the hon. Member will give me further details I will inquire.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What object is to be gained by treating these men in this way?

* MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): Why is it that the Member for South Mayo is compelled to associate with ordinary criminals?

*MR. SPEAKER: That Question has been answered already.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) rose.

* MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot continue the debate, for that is what it comes to.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I took no part in it before.

Publicans' Licences at Belfast.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury is he aware that the Collector of Inland Revenue at Belfast made objection to a magistrate's certificate for renewal of publicans' licences in cases of rebuilding of premises, and in one case required the

trader to produce a recorder's certificate; and, although the increased amount of duty was tendered, it was refused by the collector, and he instituted proceedings against the trader for selling without a licence, and obliged the trader, who had erected new premises on the site of the old licensed property, to apply for a new licence for these premises, although the renewal had been granted with the approval of the police and the sanction of the magistrates at annual petty sessions; and will he state by what authority the collector has acted in this manner.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The facts are as stated. The Collector acted under the authority of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, who were advised that a fresh certificate from Quarter Sessions was necessary, and that a licence should not be granted on a renewal certificate. The proceedings have, however, been withdrawn, an understanding with the parties having been reached, under which the necessary application will now be made to quarter sessions; and deposit of the duty has been accepted meanwhile.

Limerick Postal Staff.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that delay and inconvenience are occasioned by the inadequacy of the arrangements at the Limerick Post Office, which is a distributing centre, affecting several surrounding counties, and that the enforcements of high averages has been found to be inoperative owing to the scarcity of expert operators at subordinate offices and the withdrawal of male officers for postal duties, and that such has been represented by responsible officials; and, seeing that reliefs cannot be obtained when necessary, and that supervising officers are forced to perform instrument duties, whether an inquiry will be made as to the delay which occurs in this office in making early provision for pressure of business.

I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that females have been detained for periods up to thirty minutes beyond their official time without payment; and, in view of the strain imposed upon the female staff in an unhealthy building, will he cause an inquiry to be made in this case.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General has not the information necessary to enable him to reply in detail to the hon. Member's Questions; but he has ordered a personal inquiry to be made into the duties of the indoor staff at Limerick, both postal and telegraph, with a view to remedying any defects that may exist in the present arrangements and securing general efficiency in the performance of the service. In due course the hon. Member shall be made acquainted with the result of the inquiry.

Dublin Sorting Office Duties.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that in nearly every case when an officer was called upon to perform extra duty in the Dublin Sorting Office, three attendances had to be given, which commenced at 5 a.m. and ended at 8 p.m.; and that recently certain officers giving such attendances were paid at the rate of extra duty for an hour or an hour and a half; and, seeing that instructions have been issued to clerks supervising sections to compel men on extra duty to sign off early on the morning attendance, whether the Postmaster General will undertake that an arrangement be made by which officers compelled to perform extra duty under such conditions be allowed an opportunity of making at least three or four hours extra by way of recompensing them for the strain entailed by such duties.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It has been necessary to require a third attendance from sorting officers in the Dublin Post Office, on a good many occasions recently, owing to pressure of work and to the staff being somewhat under-manned. Whenever the total duty in each case, including such attendance, exceeds the regular limit, overtime payment is, of course, allowed for the excess; but the Postmaster General could not sanction payment for any extra duty beyond the amount actually required to

be performed in each case. He hopes, however, that under the scheme which is about to be brought forward for increasing the staff the necessity for a third attendance will be rendered much less frequent than has hitherto been the case.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

*(4.20.) The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) The receipts of the Exchequer, under our system of taxation, depend so closely upon the prosperity of the people that it is always advisable, in arranging the financial proposals for the year which is to come, to consider what has been the state of the country in the previous year. But, Sir, the year 1901 affords us no very certain guidance in this respect. It was not a year of exceptional prosperity. The ebb in our commercial and industrial activity, which began in 1900, although not augmented, had not yet turned. Some trades suffered by the national mourning, others by the depression that prevailed in foreign countries, especially Germany, with which we have great commercial intercourse. The thoughts of all of us were occupied by the war, and thousands of workers were removed from productive labour by the same cause; and yet, owing to a decline of prices, in some cases there was a fall in wages. On the other hand, though the year showed nothing to elate us, yet it showed nothing to depress us. Such records as the returns of our Bankers' Clearing House, of deposits in savings banks, of our railway traffic and the coasting trade, showed no diminution of business at home; and, though there was a fall in value in our foreign trade, yet there was a satisfactory increase in its volume; and the fall in value was mainly due to the fall in the price of coal, which, however disagreeable to those connected with that great industry, was, I think, eminently satisfactory to everybody else, including especially the iron and steel trades, which I hope, in the year that is before us, will show an improvement in consequence. There has been, therefore, on the whole, in the course of the last year, no reason for us to consider that there is any falling off in the consuming power of the people, and that we may not have good hope for the revenue for the year that is to come.

Certainly, in some great items of our revenue from Customs and Excise there has been a large falling off. The receipts from tobacco, from spirits, and from beer show a considerable decrease. So far as spirits and tobacco were concerned, that decrease was due to forestalments of duty in the previous year (1900-1901), which deprived last year of a considerable part of the revenue that properly belonged to it; and although, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am bound to regret that there has been a decrease in the consumption of beer, yet perhaps the House generally may be disposed to feel that on the whole the great increase in the consumption of tea and cocoa is a countervailing advantage.

ESTIMATES AND RECEIPTS, 1901–1902.

I have been singularly fortunate, as compared with some of my predecessors in time of costly war, and increased taxation, in that for the last two years the receipts of the revenue have exceeded my anticipations. Last year my estimates of revenue were £142,455,000, but the Exchequer receipts exceeded that amount by £543,000. The expenditure estimated for in the Budget was £184,212,000. Afterwards the House voted Supplementary Estimates of £12,631,000, nearly all of them connected with South Africa, and £73,000 was an increase which was not anticipated in the Consolidated Fund charges. On the other hand, there were savings on various heads, mainly in respect of the year 1900-1901, amounting to £1,394,000, as compared with the Estimates, so that the total Exchequer issues last year were £195,522,000. If you deduct from this the Exchequer revenue of £142,998,000, the deficit is £52,524,000. That was provided for out of the Consols loan issued last Spring, which produced a net amount of £56,553,000, leaving, therefore, a balance to the good in the Exchequer of £4,029,000.

I hope the Committee may consider that this was not an absolutely unsuccessful result of my financial arrangements for the year that has passed. At any rate, it was a much better result than

was prognosticated by high authorities on the other side. I remember one evening in July when the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, the hon. Member for Northampton, and the hon. Member for Poplar united in assuring me that I should have to provide many millions more for the cost of the war in South Africa than I had provided in my Estimates, and that we should have to hold an Autumn session of Parliament in order to find the money. And, Sir, two months later the leading organ of the Opposition in the Metropolitan daily Press—[Opposition cries of "Which is that?"]—I am not sure that I ought not to say the only organ—the *Daily News* [Opposition cries of "Oh!]—in an elaborate article, after what it described as a careful study of the financial position, assured its readers that my estimates of revenue were not likely to be reached by £3,000,000, that my estimates of expenditure would be exceeded by 17¾ millions, and that, allowing for what I had in hand from the Consols loan, I should want to borrow at least £10,000,000 more before the close of the year. Sir, I do not complain of those prophecies; I recognise that it is the ordinary duty of a self-respecting Opposition to view with suspicion even statements of fact by a Minister, and always to refuse to credit his anticipations; but at any rate I may congratulate myself that on this occasion their prophecies have been completely falsified.

WAR EXPENDITURE—SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA.

Out of the total expenditure of the year £73,197,000 was for war charges in South Africa and China. This sum includes £3,367,000 for interest on the war debt; deducting this, as a continuing charge, there remain £63,230,000 military expenditure and £6,600,000 civil expenditure, special to the year for the war, a total of £69,830,000. Towards this, £17,306,000 was contributed from the revenue, including revenue saved by the suspension of the Sinking Fund to the amount of £4,681,000.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE.

In addition to the sum of £195,522,000, expenditure chargeable to the income account of the Exchequer, the State provided out of revenue during the year £9,713,000 for the Local Taxation account, and an expenditure on Capital account of £7,548,000—namely, £1,700,000 on military works, £2,906,000 on naval works, £870,000 for the Uganda Railway, £1,061,000 for the Pacific cable, £881,000 for Post Office telephone services, and £130,000 on public buildings in connection with the Land Registry Office. So that the total expenditure provided by the State in the year was £212,783,000.

I must detain the Committee, I hope not at any great length, on the details of the revenue of the year. The Exchequer receipts from the Custom were £30,993,000—£993,000 more than my estimate. The two most interesting items to the Committee undoubtedly will be sugar and coal.

SUGAR DUTY.

Sugar produced £6,390,000, as compared with my estimate of £5,100,000. The main reason for the great excess was that there were large forestalments of sugar in December, January, and February, in anticipation, perhaps, of an increased duty. I think I may claim that the sugar duty has been a most successful tax. It has been successful in two ways, and for two reasons. In the first place, I wish to bear my strong testimony to the admirable work done by the Customs authorities in devising the details of the tax, and the tact and judgment with which they have carried it into execution. That has contributed greatly to the smoothness with which it has worked. In the second place, I have had a stroke of good fortune in the circumstances of the year. There has been, as the Committee are perhaps aware, an exceptionally good harvest of beet sugar; and that has lowered the price of sugar to such an extent that, so far as wholesale purchasers of sugar are concerned, I believe for several months past they have been paying only from 1s. 10d. to 2s. a cwt. more, including the duty of 4s. 2d. per cwt., than they paid a year ago. And although no doubt at first, as I anticipated, the retail purchaser of sugar had the price raised against him to the extent of ½d. in the pound, yet even that has gone down in many places certainly to ¼d. in the pound, and I believe in some cases to no increase at all, as compared with the prices last

year, when there was no duty on sugar. I hope it will be felt by the Committee that the somewhat doleful prophecies which came from some hon. Members whom I now see on the Benches opposite, including the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, as to the terrible burden that this sugar duty was about to impose on the working classes, have, to a great extent at any rate, been falsified.

COAL DUTY.

Now I come to another tax, which was even more bitterly opposed than the duty on sugar—the export duty on coal. We do not hear much about that now. That duty produced last year £1,314,000—a little more than my estimate, after allowing for the exemption granted to certain contracts made before the date of the Budget, and for the rebate on coal not exceeding the price of 6s. per ton free on board. The total export of coal in the twelve months ending with the 31st of last month was 44,064,000 tons; in the previous twelve months it had been 45,153,000 tons. I anticipated a decrease on account of what everybody knows has occurred—the great commercial depression in Germany, which is a large purchaser of our coal; and similar conditions, though less in extent, in other coal importing countries. But, comparing the exports of the year ending March 31st last, with the exports of the year ending March 31st, 1900, which were 43,694,000 tons, it will be seen that the exports of last year were higher than those of any previous year except the record year which immediately preceded it. Although no doubt the imports of coal into Hamburg from all sources have been less than in the previous year, yet our coal in that market has held its own; and, having carefully consulted our Consuls at several places in the Mediterranean, I think I am in a position to form a pretty certain estimate that the competition of American coal in the Mediterranean, which began owing to the high prices in the year 1900, is not likely to be continued to any extent in the year that is now before us.

Sir, there has been a curious matter with regard to this export of coal. I alluded last year to the effect the duty might have on our great shipping interest, and ventured to suggest that our shipowners, when clearing from home ports, might with advantage devote a little more space on board their ships to coal than they had previously done, so as to save them from paying the duty on coaling abroad. That was laughed at at the time; I was told I knew nothing about shipping. But the shipowners have acted upon my advice. In the year 1901 the exports of bunker coal, which, as everyone knows, is duty free, amounted to 11,827,000 tons; in the year just ended, March 31st, they amounted to 13,966,000 tons, which pretty well proves that many shipowners have taken coals for the round voyage instead of coaling, as they did formerly, partly at foreign ports, and thus a change has been effected which cannot but be to the advantage of our coal industry at home. On the whole, I will venture to say that, as far as the experience of this last year goes, there has been no ground whatever shown for those prophecies of ruin to our great coal mining and exporting industry of which we heard so much in this House last year from the representatives of that industry. I do not say that the experience of last year is conclusive, because, of course, a large part of our exports were under contracts made before the date of the Budget. The year that is to come will be a much fairer test. But this I will say, that, if the result should show that there has been in that year no increase in the export of our coal, or even a decrease as compared with former years, that will not be to my mind any proof whatever that this duty ought to be repealed.

WINE DUTIES.

I have little more to say with regard to Customs revenue. Some people are fond of suggesting to me, and I have even had such suggestions from Members of this House, that I might raise a great revenue by increasing the wine duties upon such articles as champagne. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!"] I see that that opinion is held at the present moment. The wine duties produced £38,000 less than in the year before, and the falling off was entirely in the stronger and higher taxed wines.

I venture to say that it would be absolutely impossible to obtain an increased revenue from the wine duties, and that the only result of attempting to do so would be this, that more people would drink English champagne than think they drink it at the present moment. I allowed a considerable sum for the effect of forestalments in spirits in the previous year in my estimate of the receipts from foreign spirits, but the decrease of the revenue from that source somewhat exceeded my expectation.

TOBACCO AND TEA DUTIES.

The tobacco revenue is one which should be noticed. The Exchequer receipts from tobacco in the year before last were £12,839,000. Of that, £1,500,000 was due to forestalments and really belonged to the revenue of last year. Therefore, in estimating my revenue from tobacco last year, I put that estimate as low as £11,100,000. But the actual yield to the Exchequer has only been £10,565,000. I am afraid that I cannot say that the revenue from tobacco is a growing revenue, but this year, at any rate, I expect a better yield, because fortunately there were no forestalments this Spring. I think that those gentlemen who attempted it in the previous year a little burned their fingers. We have from tea an increased revenue of £490,000 above my estimate. That concludes my review of the Customs Revenue.

EXCISE, BEER AND SPIRITS.

I now turn to the Inland Revenue. Excise shows a heavy falling off. The receipts last year were £31,600,000 as compared with £33,100,000 in the year before. Beer fell by £200,000, producing only £13,300,000, and this has been the second year in which there has been a decrease in the consumption of beer. I think the reason has been that brewers generally, instead of adding the tax to their price, have decreased the gravity of their beer; but their customers do not like the diluted article as well as the previous article. Certainly it has happened last year that fewer bulk barrels, as they are technically called, have gone into consumption from the breweries than went into consumption the year before. The revenue from home spirits has largely decreased. Last year it was £17,630,000, a decrease of £1,370,000 as compared with the year before, but nearly all this is due, not to decreased consumption on the part of the people, but to forestalments of the duty, by clearances of spirits in the year before, depriving last year of the revenue which properly belonged to it. Here again, though I cannot say that the revenue from spirits is buoyant, yet I shall expect increased receipts from spirits in the year before us. We received from glucose £64,000 under excise duty in nine months.

DEATH DUTIES.

I now turn to the death duties. They produced £18,398,000, namely, £14,200,000 to the Exchequer, and £4,198,000 to the Local Taxation Fund. The Exchequer receipts were £1,220,000 more than the previous year, and £200,000 more than my estimate. These high receipts were due to two causes on which I had calculated. In the first place, I had made arrangements to clear up a good many outstanding arrears, for the benefit, not only of the Exchequer, but also of the parties concerned, as a preliminary towards adopting in the death duty office certain arrangements for expediting business which were very much needed for the advantage of the public, and which will result, I believe, from the recommendations of a Committee presided over by the hon. and learned Member for Haddington. In the second place, at this time last year, I had reason to anticipate that the duties on certain large estates would become payable during the year. I am afraid both of those causes will not be so operative in the year now before us, and that I shall have to make a lower estimate of the yield from death duties. I may say generally, that the receipts from death duties have already suffered from the heavy fall in value of Stock Exchange Securities, especially Railway Securities, which has led, not only to a lower value in the case of the estates which fell in for death duty, but also sometimes to estates paying a lower rate of duty than they would have done three or four years ago. The total capital value of the property paying estate duty last year was £264,000,000 or £2,000,000 more than in the previous year.

STAMPS.

Stamps produced £7,800,000, £25,000 less than in the previous year. There was no real revival of business on the Stock

Exchange, and there was a curious forestalment in the year 1900-01, of the Companies' capital duty, owing to the passing of the new Companies Act, which came into operation on January 1st, 1901, and led to a great many promoters taking care to register their companies in December, 1900, in order that they might escape the operation of the Act.

INCOME TAX.

Last, but not least, I come to the income tax. I may say that though sometimes, no doubt, the death duties —the reform and extension of which we owe to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, as I have always acknowledged— may be a useful lifebuoy to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a time of difficulty, yet the real ship which bears the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this country over a stormy ocean is not the death duties, but the income tax. The yield from income tax last year was £34,800,000, a million more than my estimate. Last year I pointed out to the Committee that the yield per penny of the income tax had in the previous year been higher than had ever previously been known, although the tax stood at as high a rate as 1s. in the £1. And I believe I stated that the natural result of increasing it to 1s. 2d. would be that the yield per penny would show a decrease. That had been in accordance with the experience of years gone by. But this has been so far from being the case, that the yield from income tax last year was more than £2,500,000, higher than has ever been known before. I am grateful for the prompt response of the payers of income tax to the necessities of the country. There has been no attempt whatever— there never is—on the part of the Inland Revenue authorities, to accelerate the collection of the income tax, this year more than in other years. But, nevertheless, the collection has been as I have stated; and I can only hope that, although no doubt the Income Tax at the present rate is a heavy burden in many cases, yet those cases are not quite so numerous as some persons would suppose.

EXCHEQUER BALANCES.

The Exchequer Balances show a satisfactory change. On April 1st, 1901, they stood at £5,597,000. On the same date this year they stood at £8,567,000, and indeed they would have st od at a higher figure by £1,264,000 if there had not been some slight delay in repaying an advance which had been made by the Exchequer for some capital expenditure, and which has since been repaid. Of course the increase in the balances was mainly due to the £4,029,000 surplus receipts from the Consols loan of last year.

NATIONAL DEBT.

The account of the National Debt, I am afraid, is not quite so satisfactory. On March 31st last it stood at £768,408,000, but that included £20,532,000 expended in reproductive works, and repaid, as the Committee are aware, by Votes on the annual Estimates both as to interest and capital. Deducting that, therefore, as I have done in previous years, the total dead weight of debt was £747,876,000, being £59,884,000 more than last year. That, of course, is due to the Consols loan of £60,000,000 last Spring. The Funded Debt showed a net increase owing to that loan of £58,405,000, because £1,595,000 was paid off owing to the operation of life annuities and the redemption of the Land Tax. There was also an increase of £1,479,000 included in the total, on account of the increased value of terminable annuities, due to the further fall in Consols and the larger amount of stock which would have to be created to replace the annuities. I may state that the Unfunded Debt has not been increased in the year, and that, so far as Treasury Bills are concerned, the average rate of discount at which I have been able to place those Bills in the last six months has been £2 18s. 9d., more than ¾ per cent. less than in the same period of the two previous years.

WAR EXPENDITURE, SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA—THREE YEARS ESTIMATE.

Perhaps it may be convenient if I add to this statement an estimate, which can only be a rough estimate - - for the accounts in many cases are not yet completed—of the cost of the wars in which we have been engaged in South Africa and China during the three years ended March 31st last. The total expenditure on these wars has

been £165,034,000, made up in this way:—Interest on war debt charged to consolidated fund services £4,967,000; supply grants for South Africa £154,407,000, and for China £5,660,000; making a total of £165,034,000. This has been defrayed by loans to the amount of £119,614,000, and out of revenue, including the revenue set free by the suspension of the sinking fund, to the extent of £45,420,000. I may remind the Committee that, besides the anticipations which we have, and which are coming nearer, of repayment from the wealth of the Transvaal towards the cost of the war in South Africa, we have our share of the Chinese indemnity, which amounts to something like £6,000,000, and which, although not yet realised, has been treated as a very valuable asset by other European Powers, to set against this expenditure. When realised it ought, I think, to be devoted to the reduction of our debt.

GENERAL ESTIMATE FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR.

Now I have completed my review of the past, and I turn to what I know you are all anticipating—the prospects of the future. I will take the expenditure for the year first. The Consolidated Fund services, including the charge for the sinking fund on the old debt, and £3,650,000 for interest on the war debt, will amount to £29,450,000; the Army Estimates £69,665,000; the Navy Estimates £31,255,000; the Civil Service Estimates, including £1,800,000 special grant in aid in South Africa, £26,448,000; Customs and Inland Revenue Services £3,039,000; Postal Services £14 752,000; making a total of £174,609,000.

The revenue on the present basis of taxation should yield as follows: Customs, allowing for a full year's yield of coal duty, £32,800,000; Excise, in which again there are no forestalments, £32,700,000; Death Duties, which I must put at a million pounds lower than last year for the reason I have stated, £13,200,000; Stamps, £8,200,000; Land Tax and House Duty, £2,500,000; Income Tax, £36,600,000; total Tax Revenue, £126,000,000. Then comes the non-tax Revenue: Post Office £14,800,000; Telegraphs, £3,630,000; Crown Lands, £475,000; Suez Canal and similar receipts, £880,000; miscellaneous revenue, £2,000,000, making a total non-tax revenue of £21,785,000. This makes a total revenue on the present basis of taxation of £147,785,000. Deducting that from the estimated expenditure will leave a deficit of £26,824,000.

FURTHER WAR EXPENDITURE.

But, Sir, I have a material addition, I am sorry to say, to make to that sum. I would remind the Committee that in the Army Estimates of this year there was included a sum of £40,000,000 for war expenditure. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War stated that that sum would permit of the maintenance of our force in South Africa at its present strength for a period of between eight and nine months, but that it included no provision for gratuities at the end of the war, for transport home, or for any of those charges of great magnitude which had been included in the similar Estimates of last year, the total of which was, I think, 58¼ millions, subsequently increased by Supplementary Estimates of 5 millions—in all 63¼ millions. Now, although at the time when that Estimate was made three months ago this was as much as it seemed right to include in the Estimates for War purposes, yet the progress of the war since that time has not been as rapid as the country could have wished; and it will also be clear that if the cost of the war is to be provided for through the whole of the year that is before us, a very large addition must be made to that estimate of £40,000,000. I calculate it at something between 16 and 17 millions. But perhaps I may be asked, "Are you really going in the present circumstances to ask the House of Commons to make such an addition to these Estimates?" Well, Sir, I am. I will tell the Committee why. In the first place, it is my bounden duty as Chancellor of the Exchequer, when I am making the financial statement of the year, when I am asking the Committee to provide for the expenditure of the year, not to take a rosy view, but to put the worst before them, to ask them to provide for the worst rather than the best, and, as I hope I have done before, however unpleasant to myself, honestly and frankly, to lay the position before them.

But, Sir, more than this. We know that there are conferences proceeding at the present time. I may be asked, "Have you no hope of the happy result of those conferences?" Sir, I have hopes; but I cannot allow myself to be influenced by such hopes on such an occasion. I must put them aside, and I will ask the House to put them aside also, and I will say why. There is great truth in the old maxim, "If you want peace, prepare for war." And those of us who are most anxious for peace — and no one is more anxious for it than the Chancellor of the Exchequer—I think perhaps will see most clearly that nothing is more likely to conduce to peace at such a crisis as that at which we now stand, than a proof by the House of Commons of a firm attitude on the part of the country and of our determination that, if our hopes should unhappily not be realised, at any cost the war shall be carried to a successful issue. Therefore, Sir, I have to ask the Committee to make a large addition to the deficit which I have already stated.

OTHER ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE.

I have also to provide for three other matters. In the first place, the Committee are aware that up to July 1st next, either by Votes passed last session or by Estimates already laid on the Table, the whole cost of the equipment and maintenance of the Constabulary in South Africa has been provided for by this country. I am glad to be able to state that, whatever may be the result of what is now going on, Lord Milner has every confidence that in the next financial year of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, which will commence on July 1st, these Colonies will be able to provide for the whole cost of 6,000 of the Constabulary, in addition to what they are at present providing for, the cost of their civil administration, besides the interest on their debt, and the interest due to the bond holders and shareholders of the railways; provided that the railways by July 1st, as I hope may be possible, can be handed over to the civil administration. But, Sir, the whole strength of this Constabulary was fixed at 10,000 men, and assuming that it will be necessary, as I think it will be necessary, to maintain the force at that strength throughout the present financial year, we must provide for the cost of 4,000 of that force. I put that down at £750,000. Then I think it will be necessary for us in the course of the session to ask Parliament for some assistance to our sugar growing Colonies in the West Indies, pending the time when bounties are abolished by the Convention which has just been signed at Brussels. And, finally, I shall have to provide for interest on the fresh debt which will have to be incurred this year. Therefore, taking all these items together, I would ask to be allowed to add 18½ millions to the 27 millions I have already stated, making a total deficit of 45½ millions.

EXPENDITURE AFTER THE WAR.

Perhaps, Sir, I may be asked what is to happen if peace should come in a few weeks, and if the large sums of 56 or 57 millions I have suggested should not be all required for the purposes of the war. Well, I would remind the Committee that, in the first place, though war is a very costly thing to wage, it is also a very costly thing to terminate. We shall have to provide for gratuities and bounties to our soldiers who have served in the war. We shall have to provide large sums for disembodiment; considerable sums, I hope, for transport of reservists and others home, and for the maintenance, no doubt, of a considerable force in South Africa. Means will have to be provided for something more —something which I am sure will be more agreeable to the minds of all of us than expenditure on war. Means will have to be provided for the relief and resettlement of the two Colonies which have been so terribly devastated by the war. Means will have to be provided for rebuilding and restocking farms—farms, I should hope, not only of those who have been our friends in the war and have fought on our own side, but also of those who boldly and honestly have been our enemies in the war, and whom we hope to make our friends in the future. I think the House of Commons, if peace is made on terms which in our belief will be satisfactory, enduring, and safe, will be generous in these matters; and yet I do not believe that they need involve any great charge upon this country. For I am convinced, looking

at the remarkable progress which has been already made even during the war in the restoration of industrial prosperity in the goldfields and in the more important centres of the Transvaal, that it will be perfectly possible for the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, if we were to advance to them loans for the purposes I have described and for other similar purposes—for railway extension, for enabling them to obtain on fair terms control over their own railways, and matters of that kind—to repay such advances, both capital and interest, on terms which would be eminently satisfactory to the taxpayers of this country. Of course. any proposals of this kind could not be carried out by the Government without being fully explained to the House of Commons and without the authority of the House of Commons, and therefore no one need fear, as I think the right hon. Gentleman's Question ton ght rather suggested, that, if the money which I shall ask the Committee to provide primarily for the possible cost of the war is not expended on that service, it will not be expended beneficially, and in matters which will be infinitely more agreeable to us than any war expenditure can be.

PROPOSALS TO MEET THE DEFICIT.

I have, therefore, to deal with a deficit of 45½ millions. This is, however, not the net deficit, because I propose to reduce it by suspending the Sinking Fund, as I did last year and the year before, which means rather more than 4½ millions. The deficit would therefore be reduced to 41 millions. Now, how is that to be met? I hope that the Committee will be of the opinion, as they have been of opinion during the last two years, that part of it shall be provided by increased taxation. It is primarily a war deficit, and, being a war deficit, I think part of it ought to be provided for, by a call on the direct taxpayers as well as on the indirect taxpayers of the country.

INCOME TAX.

I make that call again on the payers of the income tax. ["Oh, oh!" and cheers]—I think I can show, in spite of the protests of my right hon. friend, that that is necessary and justified by the circumstances of the case. Sir, why has the income tax always been regarded as our great financial engine in the time of war? Why, surely for this reason—that it can be increased without that disturbance of trade, commerce, and industry which the increase of any other tax must always necessarily involve. That is, so to speak, the one redeeming feature in what otherwise would be a most disagreeable operation. There is a converse side to this question to which I wish to call attention. I have referred to the situation when the war comes to an end. I do not know when that will be, but I think there is almost a universal feeling, even in quarters most hostile to this country, that the war is now approaching its end. Well, Sir, if during the war we do not shrink from bearing that part of the cost of the war which we fairly ought to bear, then at the end of the war must come the reduction of taxation. On previous occasions it has always been felt that the income taxpayers had the first claim to such a reduction.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): They have never had it.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Never had it!

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: No.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The income tax rose to 1s. 4d. in the pound during the Crimean war, and when the war was ended it was reduced to 7d. in the pound. I am not prepared to promise so large a reduction, because there are other circumstances to be considered; but this I will venture to say, that the increase of 1d. in the pound which I now ask, ought, in our opinion, to be considered as the first item to be reduced when the happy days of peace and reduction of taxation are reached. That increase will produce £2,000,000 in the present year, and next year an additional £500,000

STAMP DUTIES.

Now I come to another form of direct taxation, as to which I shall ask leave to

make a slight addition. I refer to the stamp duties. As every one knows who has studied our finances the stamp duties are remarkable in their vicissitudes, but there is one kind of which it may be said it regularly increases, and that is a small and uniform stamp duty, which gives no trouble, and does not tempt evasion. Amongst the small stamp duties is a stamp duty of 1d. on bills at sight, and amongst these are reckoned dividend warrants and the cheques that we draw upon our bankers. Sir, I am going to ask that this 1d. tax may be 2d. I think hon. Members will be surprised when they hear how much it is anticipated that this will yield. The Inland Revenue authorities know pretty well how much is derived from this tax, because, of course, it is the custom for bankers to have their cheque-books stamped by the Inland Revenue authorities before circulating them to their customers; and, assuming that time is given, as it ought to be given, before the tax comes into force, to make the necessary arrangements, say up to July 1st, the yield for the current year of an additional 1d. on bills at sight may be no less than half a million. That is the yield for the year 1902-03. The 1d. stamp duty on cheques yielded in 1901-02 the sum of £800,000. The fact is, cheques have so enormously increased that they have become the paper currency of the country; they are used for any sum, however small. It is possible that some economically minded persons may not give quite as many cheques at 2d. as they have given in the past at 1d. If so, no one ought to be more delighted than the bankers, whose accounts will be greatly simplified. But I do not believe myself that that will be largely the result, for the simple reason, that we have all got out of the practice of carrying much cash about us; and if it costs 2d. to send a money order for £1, and as much to send postal orders for 21s. 6d., I do not see why you should be able to transmit money through the post by cheque cheaper than you can by the recognised postal tariff. I hope the Committee will consider, bearing in mind the enormous convenience of cheques, the delights of a banking account, the charm of overdrawing that account whenever your banker will allow you, that 2d. on a cheque is not too much to pay to the State for these privileges.

INDIRECT TAXATION.

Now, Sir, I come to indirect taxation——

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Hear, hear!

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am afraid that our old favourites, beer, spirits and wine, are even less promising subjects for increased taxation than they were a year ago. I think I have said something already to show the Committee that any attempt to increase taxation on those articles would not, in present circumstances, be likely to add to the revenue. Tobacco is in a similar position; nay, it is even in a worse position, for, although it has always hitherto been considered as a most peaceful and soothing article, it is now the subject of an internecine warfare on the part of rival manufacturers which I hope may result in ultimate benefit to the consumer, but which at present has utterly disorganised the trade; and I know from past experience how very sensitive a subject tobacco is to any changes in taxation, and how dangerous it is to attempt changes with a hope of greater yield to the revenue. Then, Sir, I come to tea. Well, I have listened to the pitiful cry of our fellow-subjects the tea-producers in India and Ceylon, and bearing in mind that tea, which is almost a necessary of life, is already taxed to as much as 75 per cent. of its average value, I confess I should be sorry to increase that tax. I turn to sugar. Several very astute individuals, who have no doubt cleared sugar very largely in anticipation of an increased duty, have suggested to me that sugar would well bear an addition. I have no particular desire to enable them to charge to their customers duty which they have not paid, and put it into their pockets instead of paying it into the Exchequer. But I may say this. The manufacturing industries which use sugar as a raw material undoubtedly were affected by the imposition of the duty on sugar last year. I do not think it would be fair to disturb those industries again, having before them, as they must necessarily

have, the possibility of having to work under altered conditions when the bounties are abolished eighteen months hence. And therefore, Sir, I do not propose to increase the duty on sugar.

But I have a stronger reason than anything I have named for preferring, in my search for new indirect taxation, to add some article or articles to our tariff——

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Hear, hear!

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Rather than to increase the taxation of articles already on our tariff. Sir, I ventured last year to impress strongly upon the Committee that the financial difficulty with which we had to deal was not only the war difficulty, but the rapid increase of our ordinary expenditure. I pointed out to them that in six years our ordinary expenditure had increased by no less than £28,000,000, and I think I went so far as to say that, in my judgment, if that rate of increase continued, the country must come within reach of actual financial ruin. Well, Sir, I am happy to say that that rate of increase has not continued—I am speaking, the Committee will remember, of ordinary expenditure, not of the war expenditure. Last year the ordinary Estimates and the Consolidated Fund services showed together an increase of ordinary expenditure over the previous year of no less than £12,468,000. That is what I was mainly alluding to. This year, Sir, I am happy to say, there has been a salutary change. The increase over the original Estimates for last year is £1,787,000, and the increased interest on our war debt is £1,650,000, a total of £3,437,000, as against nearly 12½ millions the year before. But, Sir, that is still an increase, and I cannot conceal from myself that, looking to the continual augmentations of military and naval armaments in other countries, looking to the ever-increasing demands made upon the Exchequer, flowing from our modern civilisation, we must expect some increase in our expenditure in years to come. I am therefore endeavouring now, as I endeavoured last year, when I asked the Committee to raise additional taxation in order to meet the charges of the war, so to frame that taxation that when peace returns and it is possible also to return to ordinary expenditure, we may have no difficulty in settling our financial system on a basis which will be equitable to all the taxpayers of the country. Sir, I have heard the cheers of my hon. friend the Member for Central Sheffield. I know that what he would tempt me to is a small tax upon a great many articles.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Foreign articles.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Now, Sir, I do not agree with that. In my belief the great clearance of the tariff with which the names of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone will always be associated, which cleared it of many—I might almost say of scores and hundreds—of articles, many of them producing very little revenue, was a greater relief to the springs of industry in this country, was a greater advantage in increasing trade and commerce and the chances of employment at good wages of our working men, and therefore in promoting their well-being, than the removal of any particular tax on any particular article, however necessary that article might be to their comfort. Therefore, in seeking for new indirect taxation, what I desire to find, as I desired to find last year, is an article practically of universal consumption, from which, therefore, a large revenue could be produced to the Exchequer without any injurious or oppressive burden on any individual or upon any class. I have had, of course I always have, many suggestions with regard to taxation; but in nearly all of them I have noticed this—that the interests of the Exchequer are not the first thing which my correspondents have at heart. There is a sort of thin veneer of regard for the Exchequer over the suggestions; but when I look underneath I discover generally that they desire to tax some odious object out of existence—such as, for example, betting advertisements in newspapers—and they would be perfectly satisfied if they were taxed out of existence; although, of course, that result would not yield one single penny to the Exchequer.

HISTORY OF THE REGISTRATION DUTY ON CORN AND FLOUR.

Now, my primary duty is to look for revenue, and my ideal of a tax is that which will yield the most revenue with the least injury and inconvenience to the community. Some persons, Sir, have thought that they have discovered such a tax in what used to be called the old registration duty on corn and flour. Well, I should like to say something to the Committee on the history of that tax. When Sir Robert Peel, in the year 1846, proposed the gradual abolition of the protective duties on corn, which according to the tariff of 1842 might have amounted to as much as £1 a quarter, he deliberately retained the duty of a shilling per qr. upon corn, and 4½d per cwt. upon flour and meal; and that tax, which was remodelled in 1864, went on for no less than twenty-three years, paying part of the cost of the Crimean War, until Mr. Lowe, not quite knowing what to do with his surplus—I wish I was in that position—abolished it in the year 1869 at a loss to the Exchequer, which even then amounted to £900,000 a year.

Why did Mr. Lowe abolish that tax? He gave two reasons. The first was that he believed that, though, of course, it was a very small duty, it had the effect of preventing this country from becoming the commercial *entrepôt* for the corn trade of the world; and that if it were abolished, this country, being situated between America on the one side, and the corn-growing countries of Eastern Europe on the other, would become such a commercial *entrepôt* for the corn trade, to the great benefit of our merchants. That was very plausible; but Mr. Lowe's expectations have been entirely disappointed. Out of the enormous imports of corn and flour into this country, the most trifling proportion is ever re-exported.

But Mr. Lowe gave a more important reason. He said—

"This is a tax on only one-third of our total consumption of corn and flour."

At that time only one third of our consumption was imported from abroad; whereas at present two-thirds are imported from abroad. Mr. Lowe said that to levy a tax on only one-third of the total consumption of an article is wrong in two ways. In the first place, it raises the price of the whole quantity of the article consumed—that which is produced in this country as well as that which is imported from abroad. It therefore takes more out of the pocket of the consumer than it gives to the Exchequer; and it gives protection to the home producer at the cost of the public at large. That is, I think, a fair statement of Mr. Lowe's argument. It was a beautiful theory, but with regard to this registration duty it was only a theory, and it had never occurred to anyone before.

When Sir Robert Peel in 1846 alluded to this duty he evidently felt that its effect upon the price of the article was absolutely nothing. If hon. Members refer to the debates of that period, they will find what I am quoting. When he announced that at the end of three years from that date—1846—the protective duties on corn and flour would entirely terminate, and that foreign corn would be imported duty free, almost with the very next breath he interpreted "duty free" to mean that it would be subject only to what he called the nominal duty of one shilling. And in later years, when Budget after Budget saw more and more articles removed from our tariff, this duty still remained. Through times which may be regarded as the heyday of free trade doctrine, no one ever objected to the duty on the ground of its being a protective duty. This was not because the attention of Parliament was never called to it.

In 1864 Mr. Gladstone deliberately remodelled the duty, which had been 1s. a quarter. He altered it to 3d. a hundredweight, with the result of increasing the duty on some kinds of corn and decreasing it on others; and he even proposed to include some kinds of grain which had not previously been included. Did any one then suggest that it was a protective duty? No. Was there ever any greater free-trader than Mr. Gladstone in 1864? Never. And yet what did he say of the tax? He did not desire it to be a permanent tax; but even while he was, in that very year, reducing the duties on tea and sugar, he said with regard to this tax that it was a tax which produced a considerable revenue and which it would not be convenient then to part with.

Then I come to a later date—the present day. I heard a cheer from the hon. Member for Poplar. He has given some study to financial questions. His words may be listened to with deference, at any rate on the Opposition side of the House. The hon. Member has written a book on this subject, and in that work he has referred to the abolition of this duty by Mr. Lowe. He states his opinion, and I have no doubt that he still holds it, that the registration duty on corn and flour violated in theory the principles of free trade; but the hon. Member goes on to say that it did not violate those principles in practice. He says—

"There was something to be said against the permanent relinquishment of a branch of revenue profitable in itself and collected with very little trouble, expense, or hindrance to trade; and practically not affecting the price of food. And it is pretty certain that if the duty were now in existence it would be retained."

I agree with the hon. Member when he adds that it was "a reckless act" to relinquish this duty. And it was proved to be so by the result; for, as I will proceed to show, the abolition of the duty, as the hon. Member states, practically did not at all affect the price of food—not even of corn like wheat, barley, and oats, which are so largely produced in this country.

The duty was abolished on June 1st, 1869. The monthly average price of wheat in January of that year was 51s. 7d. per quarter. It fell from that time until, in the last week of May, it was 45s. 2d. That was also the last week of the duty. On June 1st the duty was abolished, and the price of wheat remained the same; then it went steadily up until August, when it amounted to 52s. 1d.; and it was not until the following December that the price of wheat was again as low as it was in the previous May. What does that prove? It proves that the price of wheat is regulated by factors infinitely more potent than that of a duty of 3d. per cwt. It is regulated by questions of demand and supply, by questions of plentiful or bad harvests, by questions of the cost of transport; and as to the effect of a 3d. duty per cwt. on the price of wheat, it could be nothing more at the most than that of the dock dues which are charged on the vessel landing its cargo; it could be nothing nearly so much as the protection now given to foreign wheat by the difference between the freights for that wheat and the rates charged by the railways for our own wheat.

Did the duty check the imports of corn into this country? Did the repeal of the duty increase those imports? From 1849, when protective duties were abolished, until 1859 there was not much change in the total imports. In 1862 they rose to 74,000,000 cwt.—double what they were in 1859. Then they fell. Then in 1869 they rose to 80,000,000 cwt., which was the year of the repeal of the registration duty; and in the following year, when anybody would have supposed that, if the duty had anything to do with the matter, they would have largely risen, they fell again to 74,000,000 cwt.

Did the repeal of the duty have any effect on the price of flour? I find that the price of flour in the Mark-lane returns for the eleven weeks before the repeal was 39s. per sack of 280lb.—precisely the same as it was for the eleven weeks after the repeal. Did it make any difference in the price of bread? I think all who have studied these subjects know that the price of bread does not vary with small changes in the price of corn. The retail price of bread, like the retail price of all articles, is established by averages over a wide range of quantities and qualities, and over considerable periods of time. I have no doubt that our bakers are extremely ready to seize any excuse for increasing the price of bread, and I am afraid that the bakers and dealers together have made proportionately very much more profit out of the low price of foodstuffs in this country than has ever come to the retail consumer. But this 3d. duty on corn would amount to a very small fraction of a farthing indeed on the 2lb. loaf; and there is sufficient competition among the bakers to make it certain that, if any one attempted to raise the price of bread on such a ground as this, he would soon find it to his advantage to return to the former price. The records of price in 1869 are very imperfect; but I find that the fall of wheat between January and May of that year was 6s. 7d. a quarter; and the

fall in the price of the quartern loaf in the East End of London was rather less than ½d. And when the duty was abolished, it had no perceptible effect whatever on the price of bread.

RE-IMPOSITION OF THE DUTY.

I think that the Committee will not feel astonished if, after the arguments I have laid before them, I say that in my judgment the repeal of this duty by Mr. Lowe in 1869 was a great mistake; and that a time when it is essential to the country, in my judgment, to increase the yield from indirect taxation is a time also when it ought to be reimposed. The duty will be leviable, as before, at the time of importation when passing the Customs entry, on documentary evidence of weight, unless intended for re-exportation, in which case bond will be taken for the duty until it is re-exported. With this exception no bonding will be allowed, nor any drawback, for the same reason for which they were not allowed before, as the duty is so low. The duty will be 3d. per cwt. on all corn and grain.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Well done; well done.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Assuming that to be the duty on corn and grain, what should be the correlative duty on flour and meal? In the years to which I have referred that correlative duty was 4½d. per cwt.—50 per cent. more. It was based, of course, upon a calculation of the average quantity of corn which it took to make a certain amount of flour. But since that time the circumstances of the milling industry have undergone a considerable change. In those days the amount of flour produced from, let me say, 100cwt. of wheat was calculated to be 80cwt, it was then produced by grinding with millstones, a process now practically extinct—at any rate in the countries from which our flour comes. Under the present process of grinding flour, 100cwt. of wheat would only yield 72cwt. instead of 80cwt. of flour: but the flour would be of much finer quality, because it would not include the offal which was formerly included in the old flour. Therefore, I think it is clear that in order to equalise the duty as between flour and corn we must put the duty on flour somewhat higher than it was before, and I propose to put it at 5d. per cwt.. The duty will be imposed on all kinds of flour and meal. The total yield of those duties for the current year I estimate at £2,650,000, making the total estimated receipts from new taxation £5,150,000.

BORROWINGS.

As my estimated deficit was 41 millions, that would leave a deficit still remaining of about 35½ millions. I shall propose to borrow 32 millions of that in a form which I will state to the Committee when I propose the Resolution; and to find the rest by a draft upon our Exchequer balances, which, as I have already explained, are nearly double what they were last year.

But I have to add something more with regard to borrowing. Last year I pointed out to the Committee the difficulty in our present circumstances of financing the Exchequer during the first, second, and third quarters of the year, because, with so large a part of our revenue coming from the income tax, and being almost entirely received in the fourth quarter, and expenditure going on as it goes on in war time throughout the year, it would be necessary to enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day to obtain funds temporarily from some other source than the ordinary borrowing on Ways and Means, or by deficiency advances. I may have to ask the Committee later on for temporary borrowing powers, which would be by Treasury bills, or some short loans of that sort, to the extent of ten or twelve millions. I think the Committee will see that the necessity for anything of that kind will depend upon circumstances which we cannot now foretell. Therefore I do not include these temporary borrowing powers in the borrowing powers for which I shall ask the Committee to pass the Resolution.

FINAL BALANCE-SHEET.

My final balance-sheet will therefore be as follows—Expenditure, after suspending the Sinking Fund, but including the addition of £18,500,000 beyond the present Estimates, £188,469,000. Revenue—Customs, £35,450,000; Excise, £32,700,000; Death Duties, £13,200,000; Stamps, £8,700,000; Land Tax and

House Duty, £2,500,000; Income Tax, £38,600,000, making a total tax revenue of £131,150,000. Add the non-tax revenue of £21,785,000, and the total revenue will be £152,935,000. Deducting this from the estimated expenditure, there will be a deficit of 35½ millions, to be provided for by a loan of 32 millions and by a draft on the Exchequer Balances, to which I have already referred.

I have endeavoured to explain, to the best of my ability, and under somewhat difficult circumstances, the proposals which I have to make to the Committee for the financial arrangements of the coming year. I hope that these proposals may receive their favourable consideration. I have felt it my duty not to prophesy smooth things. I have felt it my duty to put the worst, rather than the best, before the judgment of the Committee. It would have been a much more agreeable task to have fallen in with what was almost the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition, and have made my Budget depend upon hopes which possibly may not be realised.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I did not suggest that.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Well, that was what I thought was the suggestion. It may be felt that my demands are too large for the circumstances of the case. It may be felt that what I have asked for may never be required. But, Sir, I venture to say it is always best to choose the disagreeable task. It is not agreeable to me to feel that this year again I am to some extent undoing the good work which my predecessors have done, and which I imitated in more prosperous times, in the reduction of the National Debt. It is even more unpleasant to be obl ged to ask a limited class of the community—those who pay income tax—to bear an additional burden, and to restore to our tariff an article of universal consumption which has been free from taxation for a generation. But, Sir, I remember something which Mr. Gladstone said when, in the early days of the Crimean War, after a series of Budgets in which article after article had been freed from taxation, he had to propose new taxation for war expenditure. I remember he then warned the Committee whom he was addressing that, in the vista of expenditure opening before them, it was impossible to say how long a continuance of exemption from taxation would be accorded to the articles which he had himself freed from it, among which, it will be remembered, corn and flour were not included.

GENERAL FINANCIAL SITUATION.

The position today is much the same, to my mind, as it was in Mr. Gladstone's time. The crux of the situation is the necessity for increased indirect taxation. I have proposed such an increase. I know very well that the very name of a duty on corn may arouse prejudices strong and deep, born in the days when such a duty meant a duty intended to make corn dear, which, sometimes at any rate, was but too successful in its object. That, Sir, is not the duty which I propose today. It may be that attempts will be made to fan these prejudices into a flame by a renewal of the cry of taxing the food of the people—[Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!"]—a cry which has always seemed to me somewhat absurd, considering that some kinds of wholesome food have always been taxed in our tariff. I cannot myself see that it is more wrong to tax an article that is consumed by a man than to tax the means by which he purchases it. I remember this cry was attempted to be raised last year when I proposed the duty on sugar. I remember that the good sense of the people at large rejected it; and I believe they will reject it again. I am convinced that they know and feel that, with the high wages of the present day (and bread so cheap that even in comparatively poor households I fear it is sometimes wasted), the tax I am proposing could at the very worst be but a very trifling contribution on their part to the cost of a war which the great bulk of them approve, and to the ever-increasing charge for the Navy, one of whose primary duties it is to protect the food supply of the country. Of this I am quite certain—that by no other indirect taxation could by any possibility so much money be found for the Exchequer

with so little effect upon the price of the article on which it is imposed, with so little injury to any manufacturing industry, or with less general disturbance of the trade and commerce of the country. I beg to move the Resolution.

B.—CUSTOMS.—CORN, GRAIN AND MEAL, &c.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there shall be charged on and after the 15th day of April, 1902, the following Customs import duties:—

	£	s.	d.
Corn and Grain of all kinds, and peas, beans, and lentils - - - per cwt.	0	0	3
Flour and all kinds of meal and prepared grain, starch, and all farinaceous and starchy substances used as articles of food - per cwt.	0	0	5 "

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*(6.18.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I am sure the House has listened with satisfaction to the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been able, with all the incapacities from which he has been suffering, to introduce his financial statement tonight. With a great deal of what he has said and with many of the principles which he has laid down, I tonight, as I have on former occasions, have been able to cordially concur; but with the last proposal which occupied the conclusion of his speech I must express my entire and absolute disagreement. Much as we all regret the enormous burdens placed on the people of this country as the consequence of this war, I do not think there is anything that will bring home to them more completely the real results of the war in all its branches than will the taxation proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer tonight. In his third war Budget the right hon. Gentleman has been compelled to again increase the income tax, and has also been obliged to place, on the first necessity of the food of the people, a tax from which they have been so long free. I believe I can say that, on this side of the House at least, that proposal will meet with the most decided opposition. The right hon. Gentleman asked why there should be any more objection to this proposal than to the sugar tax. Well, Sir, sugar is a comfort, but corn is a thing of the first necessity, and, therefore, a tax upon corn falls upon the very poorest of the poor. And it is a thing in which they are not able to economise, for many of them are not able to obtain sufficient of the bare necessaries of subsistence.

What is the argument on which the right hon. Gentleman relies? His argument is this—that this is so small a tax that it will not affect the consumption of the commodity. Why, Sir, that is the old fallacy of the old Protectionists; but, if the argument is true that the tax will not affect the price, why did the right hon. Gentleman say that he objected to putting a tax upon a great number of commodities? You may say of a great number of commodities that if you put a shilling duty upon them it will not affect their price. In that way you may go through the whole scale of commodities. The right hon. Gentleman's own arguments are self-destructive. I do not propose now to go into detail upon this point, because we shall have and we ought to have many other occasions for discussing this tax before it is imposed upon the country. I think this is quite the most formidable proposal for taxation that has been made for many a long year. I think too, it is far the most objectionable proposal, and if I had to select the one tax which was the worst that could be chosen I should say it was the tax on corn. The right hon. Gentleman says that it is prejudice to say that it is a tax on the food of the people. It is a tax on the food of the people, and you cannot alter that fact. It is a tax on the very commodity which is the most extreme necessity of the poorest of the poor, and is a tax which of all taxes ought to be avoided. The right hon. Gentleman says it existed for a good many years, and so it did.

Everybody will feel that this means a great deal more than is implied. My sympathy is entirely with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the position in which he finds himself. I do not know anybody who has suffered more from the vicissitudes of fortune in his financial

career. He began with three years of extraordinary prosperity. He came into a land flowing with milk and honey. He revelled in surpluses, one after another, though he laid down the proposition that to enjoy a surplus was a proof of the incapacity of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and only showed what a bad calculator he was. If that is discreditable, he has retrieved his reputation, because his surpluses no longer exist. The right hon. Gentleman in that period when I say he revelled in surpluses was able to gratify a good many favoured interests, and he found, even in the extremity of his surpluses, an opportunity of reducing the Sinking Fund. Upon the strength of an Extraordinary Treasury Minute, which expressed its alarm at the prospect of there being a Sinking Fund of £9,250,000 in the year 1906, the Sinking Fund was reduced by one-third. I think the Treasury need not have been alarmed. At all events, they may be reassured that in 1906 there will not be a Sinking Fund of £9,250,000. I doubt very much, considering the rate of taxation and the rate of expenditure, whether there is any one in this House who will ever see a Sinking Fund again.

But the right hon. Gentleman has seen lean years, and year after year he has had to repeat the process, which he says is so painful, of increasing taxation. I am sure it is not congenial to the right hon. Gentleman to perform such a task. There is a celebrated comedy of which the title is "A Physician in Spite of Himself." I am quite sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a spendthrift against his will. But, Sir, what we are more concerned with than anything else, and what I desire to know is, what are the prospects we have of a diminution of this rate of expenditure and taxation? Is the taxation we are now paying likely to be diminished when the war is over? That is a question upon which the country ought to have some understanding. The right hon. Gentleman last year in his Budget speech made the remarkable statement that of the taxes imposed in the year 1900, which amounted to £12,000,000, if the war was over in the next month or two not a penny could be remitted. That is the situation. He stated that that £12,000,000 of additional taxation was voted by the House as a contribution to the war and as a war tax. In that year, however, nothing was contributed by taxation to the war. The whole of it was met by loan. I want to know whether the right hon. Gentleman will lay on the Table of the House a statement which will show distinctly how much of the additional taxation that has been imposed in the last three years has gone to the war. He told us last year that none of the taxation of 1900 went to the war, and that it would have been equally necessary if the war had not been going on. In order to ascertain how much of your taxation has gone to the war, you ought to defray all your normal expenditure and then see how much of the additional taxation was available for the war. Up to last year it is quite plain that none had gone to the war at all. And I think we ought to have a statement in an official form of how much of the additional taxation has gone to the war after defraying normal expenditure. Last year you imposed £11,000,000 of taxation. How much of that has gone to the war? As I understand it, you imposed £12,000,000 in 1900, and £11,000,000 in 1901. How much of that additional taxation has gone to the war, and how much was necessary to meet your normal expenditure? You will find, then, that what has generally been supposed to be a contribution to the war out of taxation has been nothing of the kind. It has been merely ordinary taxation, which would be necessary without the war; and you will find that almost an insignificant fraction has been contributed by taxation to the war. I would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us a clear official statement of the matter, and to let us see exactly how we stand in reference to it. I do not know that the figures are exact, but there may have been £12,000,000 raised in 1900 and £11,000,000 in 1901—that is to say £23,000,000—and of that nearly a half, at all events, has not gone to the war at all, but to ordinary expenditure. That is a matter which, I think, is not clearly understood, and has a very strong bearing on what are the prospects of a reduction of taxation after the war is over.

So much for that. Then the right hon. Gentleman has spoken of what are going to be the consequences if, as he devoutly wishes, and as I hope everybody wishes, the war comes to an end. There are, I regret to say, in the War Press those who seem to desire that everything shall happen which will prevent the conclusion of peace. I feel sure that it is not the feeling of this country and of the Members of this House. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said quite truly that there will be heavy expenses in winding up a war. There is no doubt that bringing a war to an end does not bring the expenditure to an end, least of all where you are annexing territories of immense extent. I think we ought to endeavour to form some idea of the hopes that can be held out to the country as to the extent to which the present taxation which you have imposed is going to be diminished when the war is over. I doubt very much whether it will be diminished at all. In 1815, and at other times, when war was over the income tax was at once repealed. The deficit this year is practically as large as last year. You borrowed a margin of ten millions for war, which, as I understand, is all gone, and the £10,000,000 advanced for deficiencies, which was to be replaced at the end of the year, has not been replaced. You propose to ask again the sum of £10,000,000 or thereabouts for the purpose of deficiency bills, and you have not repaid the £10,000,000 you borrowed last year. You have taken out of that £10,000,000, £6,000,000, leaving only £4, 000,000, which you propose to apply to the expenditure of this year. That, of course, is an entire failure to fulfil the conditions under which that £10,000,000 was voted by the House.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I explained to the House that if the war ended by the middle of the year, or at a reasonable time before its close, I should be able to pay off either the whole or part of the £10,000,000 which I borrowed for temporary purposes by redeeming Treasury bills; but I said that if the war went on, the money would have to be expended for the purposes of the war. That was quite understood.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not quite understand why in the world this additional £10,000,000 should have been asked for only to meet deficiency bills. The only pretence for voting that money was that your income came in largely at the end of the financial year, and that then you would thus be in funds to repay it. That was the bargain, and it has not been fulfilled.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In discussing the Loan Bill I explained to the House that if the War ended I would be able to repay the money which I had borrowed by redeeming Treasury bills.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The only pretence for voting this money was because your income would come in largely at the end of the year. It was quite independent of the duration of the war. The country may endure this enormous expenditure with greater patience if they are satisfied that all of it has been necessary for the purposes to which you assert that you devote it. But the country is not satisfied of this, and that is why it is impatient under this enormous expenditure. If at the beginning you had perceived that you would need a more mobile Army, and if you had provided yourselves with a properly mounted force at the beginning or even at an early date, the war would have been over long ago. That which you are now beginning to do, you should have done much earlier, and so saved many lives and many millions. Everybody knows that the policy, the strategy in the earlier part of the war, led very largely to the continuance of the war. The country is not satisfied that the money paid on the contracts is money that ought to have been paid, that there has not been a great deal of waste; that when you bought too few horses you did not buy them at too high a price, and too inferior quality. One thinks of the meat contracts. Is not there disquietude in the public mind due to the feeling that, after all, this taxation and this borrowing to such an extent might have been avoided? You have refused an inquiry; you have removed all means of satisfying the country that this expenditure has been necessary and prudent.

There is the still more important question which the House has to consider: What is going to be the expenditure after the war is over, the expenditure on the country you have acquired? It has to be seen whether it is not more expensive to repair than to ruin a country. What is the situation in this enormous territory, in these two colonies which were once independent Republics? What is the condition of your Cape Colony itself? The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of compensation, of restoration, in language which, I am sure, the House will agree with. He said that it was a policy to be applied, not only to our own people, but to our gallant foes. But does anyone form a conception to himself of what that means? Where is the money to come from? What does it amount to? If we "think in continents" we have to pay in continents. This megalomania is a very fine thing, no doubt, but it is a very costly luxury. All this passion for the extension of territory and the annexation of independent countries involves a ruinous expenditure. Let us see a few of the things it involves. You have to pay first of all the compensations. What will that amount to? You are maintaining the people in the camps. What are you going to do with them when peace happily arrives? There is the settlement expenditure. Where are you going to get the people to settle in the conquered territory? I saw the other day a reported conversation with the late Mr. Rhodes, in which he gave his idea as to what the character of the settlement was to be. He said you ought to have 2,000 people, to whom you should give £4,000 apiece, to settle them as farmers in the Transvaal. That involves a sum of £8,000,000. But what would 2,000 people be, scattered over this enormous territory? If you multiply this number by ten, you will not have an inadequate estimate. And who are to go there? I have no doubt you can always pick up people to go and settle anywhere if you give them £4,000; but I should like to see any gentleman conversant with land in this country giving persons without experience, going to farm country which they do not understand, and manage cattle which they have never managed, £4,000 apiece. What would become of that £4,000, and how long would it last? At the end of six months the £4,000 would be gone; and the recipients would not have settled in the country. They would have gone to the Johannesburg diggings to pick up gold there. That would be the history of a settlement scheme of the kind which, if carried out, would cost scores of millions. I see an hon. and learned Gentleman opposite who has studied these matters much. He will confirm me when I say that you can do nothing in that country, which has a great lack of water, without irrigation. Irrigation is costly; and if you are going to irrigate districts as large and France and Spain together, how many millions do you propose to appropriate for the purpose?

Then there is another thing to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded—the army of occupation. How many men do you estimate you will require to keep there? The hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield informed us the other day that there ought to be 100,000; and, if possible, a still greater military authority—Sir R. Giffen—appropriates about £25,000,000 of English taxation for the annual cost of the new provinces we have acquired. Well, that means a shilling income tax. But I do not know what the Government estimate is, and I think we ought to have some idea of what the cost is likely to be. The men are to be mounted, and so the force will be more costly. What will be the cost of many thousands of mounted men as an occupation force? At least, you will require, I suppose, half as many men as you have in our Indian possessions, about 30,000, but for the force in India you make India pay. We are told this war is waged for the Empire; but it is to be observed that it is not the Empire that pays; it is this miserably insignificant part of the Empire called the United Kingdom that is to pay for it all.

And this brings me to the consideration of what the right hon. Gentleman said, that we were nearing the time when the Transvaal would be able to pay something. I know this—it has been said as a consolation to the country—that when peace comes the gold industry will pay; but that I believe to be founded on fallacy. If loans are made to the

Transvaal with the hope of developing the gold mining, I believe the security would not be a good one for anything like the expenditure which will have to be incurred. I believe such loans would have to be defrayed exclusively by the British taxpayers. I have seen, within the last few weeks, some remarkable letters written by a Special Commissioner of the *Economist* newspaper as to the character of the goldfields in South Africa, and it is to be supposed that what is written specially for such a paper can be accepted with some confidence. He says there have been enormously exaggerated ideas of mining development and gold production in South Africa. I will not weary the Committee with long extracts, but this Commissioner refers to a remarkable speech recently made by Lord Milner, a speech made after dinner, and addressed to some of the leading citizens of Johannesburg, in which he referred to Johannesburg as likely to become "one of the greatest cities of the world, and, not wishing to encourage schemes that were doubtful and too ambitious," he was moderate in the expectations he formed. But, looking forward to 1904, he hinted at a population of five millions. Well, if the population of Johannesburg in two years was to exceed that of Canada and nearly equal that of Australia, by all means let them bear the whole of the war debt. Commenting on this statement, the Special Commissioner said—

"Lord Milner lately ventured the statement that before long there would be five million white people in the Transvaal—the inference being that they were to be supported mainly by the mining industry. If his Lordship knew that country as well as I do, he would realise that even in twenty years from now there will not be five million whites in the whole of South Africa. The mistake of Lord Milner on a problem connected with gold mining in South Africa is typical of the far greater ignorance in the average lay mind on the same subject. I suppose that at the present moment there are really hundreds of thousands of people in Great Britain who believe that South Africa—and especially the Transvaal—is simply teeming with thousands of potential mines, which the narrowness and ignorance of the Boers caused to lie undeveloped, and which are about to be floated off by generous capitalists, and make rich everyone who is now shrewd enough to buy the shares. As regards the already floated mines, they believe that, under an enlightened Government, there is now going to be an all-round reduction of five or six shillings a ton in the cost of treating the ore, and that the dividends are going to be far higher than before. No wonder, seeing how wide-spread are these beliefs, that there has been a strong market in South Africans, and no wonder that the company promoters are now preparing some hundreds of quite worthless flotations for the acceptance of this gullible multitude.

"In this paper, for the twelfth time, let me say that the Transvaal has been prospected over and over again from one end to the other, and that no payable patches of ore are known to exist which have not already been worked for years. When I first went to the Transvaal to mine, not only was the Rand an important field, but there was much activity at Heidelberg, Klerksdorp, De Kaap, Lydenburg, and all over the 'Low Country.' As the years passed by, one mine after another in these outside districts closed down. When the war started there were, I suppose, not six outside mines working at a profit. And yet there had been hundreds of companies to commence with. There are hundreds of reefs all over the country—banket reefs, or any other variety you fancy—but they are no good. Not only are they unpayable, but no sophistry can make them anything else. They might get dynamite for nothing, and be relieved from all the other oppressions of the 'corrupt oligarchy,' and still they would be unpayable. And yet all these mines are going to be refloated very soon, and puffed in the good old-fashioned way, and the public is again going to lose heavily on them. This time I expect the losses will be greater than before. The promoter floats with a bigger capital now, and will have a bigger public to sell to."

Without wearying the House with further quotations, I may say that there are three or four letters in which this gentleman proceeds to show that the production of gold is limited, and that outside mines already worked there is little to be expected, and that the whole of these representations are really in preparation for a great scheme of flotation for mines not promoted for working but for selling. This I believe to be perfectly true, that in South Africa enormous fortunes have been accumulated not by the productions of mines, for the mines have failed, but by the sale by projectors of worthless mines to ignorant and credulous people. That is the real secret of the enormous fortunes that have been made. Therefore, the notion that these millions to be spent in the development of the country would be realised in any considerable part from new gold fields of payable gold in the Transvaal is a delusion by which the country has been deceived, and is likely to be still more misled.

The Chamber of Mines, through its chairman, has spoken very much in this sense. The chairman has expressed his opinion that a great extension of production cannot be expected, and that little taxation ought to be imposed, and he

expressed the utmost confidence in Lord Milner. But Lord Milner has nobody to rely on except these gold gentlemen; there is no other population, there is nobody else Lord Milner can act with or upon, and they oppose taxation. The hope, therefore, to realise this money from the Transvaal is an utter delusion. These are matters upon which we really ought to have a great deal more information than we possess, and I hope that before the debate closes the right hon. Gentleman will place us in a position to form some idea what the future chances are of this heavy burden of taxation being less than it is at present. He has pointed out, unfortunately too truly, that great as has been the expenditure at home, it is still going on increasing, and it is likely, with the spirit which has been developed in the country, to increase in the future. If this is so, there is very little hope that when peace is concluded the people of this country will be released from the weight of taxation it has been his painful duty to impose. One thing I must ask the right hon. Gentleman, and that is what opportunity will be given to the House for the discussion of his proposals. A good many people will not be satisfied with them, and they would like to have full opportunities of considering their effect. There was a misapprehension upon this subject last year, when it was said we might discuss the general bearing of the question at a later stage.

Such a statement as has been made tonight by the right hon. Gentleman, is one that cannot be discussed in the course of one night. It seems to me that there ought to be an opportunity given on which we should have a discussion on the whole financial position as it has been affected by the war, and as it will be affected by peace. There was a misapprehension on this subject last year, and I think we ought to have a clear understanding on the matter tonight. It should be understood, too, that the chairman of the Committee is a party to the arrangement, so that it may be carried out. I hope that, before these debates close, we may have a statement as to what the Government propose to do in this respect.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I merely wish to say a word with regard to the concluding remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. It is the invariable practice for the Committee to grant the new Taxation Resolutions the first night, with the understanding that a future opportunity should be given for a renewal of the debate. If we are permitted to obtain tonight, as I think we should obtain, the new Taxing Resolution, we should endeavour to meet the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman, and, by arrangement, set aside a night for a full debate on the subject. Then there is a second consideration. I have stated that it will be necessary for us to borrow on loan, and that, for obvious reasons which any one acquainted with financial matters will understand, is a matter that must be dealt with promptly by the House. What, therefore, I would venture to suggest is that, if we are permitted to take the Resolution with regard to the loan as well as the corn duty, the Government will arrange that some other Resolution, like the Income Tax Resolution, should be taken on a future night for the general discussion. That, I think, would meet the general wishes of the Committee, and would be in accordance with the practice of previous years.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: With reference to the loan I do not think that any inconvenience occurred last year in consequence of the loan being postponed. Last year the difficulty was that the Chairman of Committees understood he was bound on the introduction of the Resolution to allow nothing to be said on the general question and that understanding was strictly adhered to in all the other Resolutions. I raise the point because I think it is only fair to the House to do so.

(7.8.) MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I am sure nothing is likely to conduce more effectually to the successful issue of the peace conferences in South Africa than the Chancellor of the Exchequer's generous expression of opinion and intention towards the foe with whom we have been so long in conflict. I am sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in thus stating the views of the Government, expressed nothing but the feeling of hon. Members in all parts of the House and of all classes in the country. I rose, however, particularly to make some reply to the

observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite with regard to the duty on corn. My principle object in rising was to make a few observations in reply to that part of the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman objected to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He complained very much of the course adopted by my right hon. friend in making this new proposal for taxation, and stated that he would offer to it the most earnest and determined opposition in his power. The right hon. Gentleman is an expert in these matters, and his opinion is entitled to great weight and authority. But I think the House cannot have failed to perceive the extreme exaggeration which pervaded the right hon. Gentleman's speech throughout. What are the facts with which my right hon. friend is confronted, and what is the position he has to meet? The facts are perfectly simple. He has an enormous deficit, which must be provided for and met in some way. The position of my right hon. friend, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, is that he has pretty well exhausted all the ordinary resources for obtaining any great additional revenue from existing sources of taxation, and he is obliged to try others. Among them he is going to try the revival of the old 1s. duty upon corn. One must admit, at all events, one advantage which this proposal has. It is not a new one; we have had experience of it before. We have had experience of its effects as a tax, and we have had experience of its repeal. As a tax I defy any human being to prove that it ever did the slightest harm in this country. Its repeal did not the slightest good to anybody. In consequence I entirely agree with my right hon. friend upon that point. I have always regarded the repeal of that tax as an act of considerable financial unwisdom, if, indeed, it might not be better described as an act of great financial folly. So much for the past.

But what are the recommendations which can be urged in favour of this proposal as a tax to be imposed upon the country in the future? In the first place, the burden of the duty will be absolutely infinitesimal at the present time. In the second place I will undertake to say that the price of bread to the workers and the labouring classes will not be raised by even the fraction of a farthing. Therefore, if that be so, the main part of the objections urged by the right hon. Gentleman falls entirely to the ground. In the third place, I venture to say that no other tax could be named, producing an equal amount of revenue, which would so little injure or affect the general public of the country. No argument can be adduced against it, except on the ground of sentiment, and, in the present financial position, as I have often thought and said, sentiment in these matters is a luxury far too expensive for us to indulge in. I quite admit that, as a Protective measure, the effect of this tax will be practically *nil*. On the other hand, it will produce no less a revenue than £2,650,000 a year. I should like to ask this question of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who has had many years experience in the position now held by my right hon. friend—Where will he find another tax to produce an equivalent revenue to this one, with so many recommendations and so few objections? I believe my right hon. friend in taking this step has adopted a most wise and courageous course. The proposal he has submitted to the House and the country is supported by justice, by reason, by the results of experience, and also by expediency, and I believe it will meet with far more general acceptance and approval among different classes in the country than many hon. Gentlemen think at all likely. In a word, I believe the verdict of multitudes of people will be—"Thank God that in connection with the financial policy of this country we have brought to bear a little common-sense at last!"

(7.18.) MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he would have not troubled the Committee but for the pointed reference to himself in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the occasion referred to by the right hon. Gentleman he was discussing the question from the point of view of the expenditure and the reduction of the debt of the country. In his opinion, thirty years ago there was a reckless relinquishment of taxation, while very

little was applied annually to the reduction of debt, and his argument in the passages referred to was that it would have been better, instead of relinquishing the duty in question, to apply it to the reduction of the Debt. Moreover, at that time, Mr. Lowe, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Gladstone, as Prime Minister, could not have anticipated the enormous increase which had taken place in the expenditure of the country. Certainly, not having the gift of prophecy, they could not have anticipated the advent of the Colonial Secretary, or of the right hon. Gentleman who preached economy but did not make his colleagues practise it to any large extent. He would also point out that it was one thing to repeal a tax, but quite another to impose it. When this tax was left on, it was purely for the purposes of registration, and produced a very small amount. It was afterwards admitted that the imports of corn could be registered perfectly well without the imposition of the tax, and, when relinquished, the duty was producing less than £1,000,000 a year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was now going to reimpose it, when it would produce over £2,500,000—surely a very different tax. The right hon. Gentleman himself had pointed out that, while thirty years ago it affected only one-third of the whole trade, it would today affect two-thirds, so that it was a much more Protective duty now than then. ["No."] A larger amount was levied on foreign corn, and a smaller amount of home-produced corn would be benefited by it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH asked if the hon. Gentleman really meant that if only a single quarter of corn was produced in this country, the tax would be more Protective than if a large quantity was produced?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the result would certainly be to raise the price of that particular quarter of corn. [Laughter.] The hon. Member for Oldham laughed, but surely that would be the result, and the right hon. Gentleman himself would probably not deny that any duty would have some effect in raising the price. At all events, that was his opinion. It ought also to be remembered that thirty years ago the price of corn was almost double its present price. The reimposition of the corn duty was a very serious step in retrogression of all the principles of taxation to which the country had been of late years accustomed.

He did not intend to go into the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; he rose simply to point out that, although the right hon. Gentleman did not misquote him, he did not give the qualification which he very carefully made. His withers, therefore, were entirely unwrung, and he would certainly oppose the tax, which he believed would cause unnecessary interference with and worry to the trade of the country. But he cordially supported the proposal to impose another penny on the income tax. Indeed, as the right hon. Gentleman was raising only a very inadequate proportion of the deficit by increased taxation, he wished he had taken it wholly out of the income tax by an addition of twopence instead of a penny. It would have been better for trade, for the consumers, and for the country at large, rather than to have reimposed a duty which could only have the effect of hampering and harassing trade.

(7.26.) MR. JAMES LOWTHER: During the earlier part of my right hon. friend's speech tonight I took a very hopeless view; he appeared to me to be floundering along very much on the old lines. Towards the end of his speech, however, there was introduced what my right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division has called the element of common sense. I do not wish to be misunderstood in this connection. There is not an element of Protection in this proposal. It is not as a Protectionist who has, during the whole of his lifetime, advocated those principles, that I welcome this recurrence to common sense after an aberration of more than a political generation. I welcome it upon financial, and purely financial, grounds. We know perfectly well that the narrow basis upon which our taxation rests is now generally condemned by all thinking persons who deal with matters of finance. A few

days ago I received a copy of a memorandum by the Committee of the Cobden Club, entitled, "How to Increase the Public Revenue." Of course there are in it many points from which I wholly disagree, but there is one under the head of "Direct Taxation" which I would seriously commend to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to all who oppose his proposals. The Cobden Club says—

"We now pass to the question of direct taxation. In a country where almost every man who likes can secure a vote, the present wholesale exemption from the payment of direct taxes forms a serious political danger. . . . . We therefore urge that direct taxation should be extended, either by lowering the present limit of exemption from income tax, so as to include all incomes over £100 a year, or by extending the inhabited house duty to all houses and tenements above £10 in annual value, and making the rate of the house duty fall and rise with the rate of the income tax."

I shall not go into this point at the present time, but it shows that even Sir Robert Giffen recognises this principle. [AN HON. MEMBER: But those are not the views which he expressed years ago.] I do not welcome this proposal as a return to Protection, but as an admission that the present system is a danger to the State. This document says—

"It is only by direct taxation that the responsibility for national expenditure can be brought home to the taxpayer, for an indirect tax is always uncertain in its incidence, and often appears to be no tax at all."

I maintain that, on purely revenue grounds, the new tax on corn announced tonight is a proper one, and one which, at any rate, has nothing to do with the treatment of home industries. I hope the time will come when we shall decide to raise the greater portion of our revenue by indirect means. The Chancellor of the Exchequer several years ago propounded an absolutely novel doctrine—that direct and indirect taxation should, as far as possible, be brought to a level, ignoring the fact that the income tax payer has to pay a larger proportion, relatively, of the indirect taxes than any other class of the community. I suppose it is in conformity with this novel but indefensible doctrine that my right hon. friend now proposes to put another penny on the income tax. I would like to know what the right hon. Gentleman means by that doctrine. Does he mean that when an indirect tax is put on, there ought also to be an equivalent tax put on as a direct tax? Does he mean that what he calls the income tax payers, as a class, should pay this additional direct tax and at the same time ignore the fact that they already pay a larger proportion, relatively, of the indirect taxes than any other class of the community? I suppose my right hon. friend holds the view that, after putting a tax upon sparkling wines, which are wholly consumed by the income tax paying class, he makes it fair to them by putting another penny on the income tax besides.

I notice that my right hon. friend has tried to balance his indirect taxes by putting another penny upon the income tax, which is evidently done to carry out this theory. Nobody except the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth ever endorsed this extraordinary theory of taxation, that direct and indirect taxes should be equalised. The Cobden Club suggests very properly that exemptions from income tax should be diminished, and that the great mass of voters should contribute. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, leaves the incidence of the income tax exactly as it is, and proceeds upon the old lines. That is a very dangerous doctrine, which is absolutely unsound. My right hon. friend produced no authority whatever in support of this extraordinary theory. I hope my right hon. friend will not persevere with this untenable theory, which is contrary to all sound finance. My right hon. friend always displays an indifference to any attempt to weld the Empire together upon commercial lines, and he is essentially a Little Englander in finance. As I said last year, he draws no distinction between a Canadian and a Belgian, and he rather prefers the Belgian on account of his proximity. I think a great opportunity has been missed for framing our fiscal system upon a basis that will meet the requirements of the great bulk of our fellow subjects in various parts of the world, and which would have placed our financial system upon a sound basis.

As regards indirect taxation, I should have thought that those who talk so

loudly about protecting the food of the people from taxation would have suggested that some articles of manufacture not produced here should take the place of such articles as coffee and tea, which are regarded as necessaries rather than luxuries. I am not going to say a word against the tea or coffee duty from a taxation point of view, but I have never been able to understand why indirect taxation should be raised on articles not produced here that formed the staple of life, while articles which compete with the products of our labour are admitted without let or hindrance into the country, and without the manufacturers of those goods bearing any of the burden of the rates and taxes which other producers of food and other commodities have to bear in this country. This may be considered a narrow system of finance, but it is coming rapidly to the front at the present time. I have been told that it is no use talking about a registration duty on corn, but I have gone on with this principle notwithstanding that warning, and I do not think that I am now so very much out of my reckoning. I want to know why the people of this country should have to pay rates and taxes upon the production of articles when other articles are allowed to come into this country free of contribution towards the rates and taxes. I say that this system is unjust and unsound. It is contrary to commonsense, and I venture to say that the public opinion of this country will not allow it very much longer. The people do not want all this claptrap about free trade. The people know perfectly well that a large revenue has to be raised, and they are not going to be curtailed in their financial operations by any old-fashioned prejudices of that kind. My right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer lives in the financial world of fifty years ago, and he is several generations behind his time. He believes in the doctrines of a school, the teachings of which have become more and more discredited as time goes on, and he has closed his eyes to what must be the inevitable result. We have not only this country to think of, but also all our colonies and dependencies, the representatives of which will shortly be amongst us. I think my right hon. friend will find that his obsolete prejudices of a century ago will not enable him to deal with the crisis of the present day, and I hope the time will come before long when we shall decide to raise the greater portion of our revenue by indirect means.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Hear, hear!

(7.40.) MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year promised him that he would consider some means by which the working man could get cheaper tobacco, or the equivalent in better quality. His complaint then was that the poor man upon his tobacco paid as much revenue as the man who purchased the best class of tobacco. The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted the anomaly in that respect, and he said that he would, during the ensuing year, make some arrangement by which that anomaly might be considerably reduced, if not done away with altogether. Apparently he had forgotten all about that promise in his excitement of levying these new taxes, and he had lost sight altogether of that promise. He hoped it was not too late now for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tell the Committe whether he would be able to give proper consideration to this point during the ensuing year.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I did consider the matter, and made a good deal of inquiry, but found that what the hon. Member had in his mind would distinctly not be to the benefit of the consumer, although it might be to the benefit of the manufacturer of tobacco.

MR. BROADHURST said that something might be devised for the benefit of the poor consumer, and he could not see why something of the kind could not be worked out. It was monstrous that the man consuming the very dregs of the tobacco trade should pay the enormous duty on tobacco that he did pay, while those who smoked the very best material only paid the same amount. He sincerely trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not give up the problem as one which could not be solved. He must warn the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this

new tax upon corn would be fought with all the strength they could command on the Opposition side of the House. A more monstrous tax he could not imagine. We had been engaged in a war for three years, spending £200,000,000. It was contemplated now at a cost of £200,000,000 to build up that which we had knocked down, and for the pleasure of the foreign mine owners in South Africa we were now going to tax the bread of the widows and orphans at the centre of the empire. [Laughter.] Yes, but we were going to do it. Hon. Members might say that it would not tax them, but why were the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Sleaford and Thanet pleased with the proposal? They regarded it as an instalment of better things to come. Only a few moments back the Member for Thanet said this was a very good start, but that we had nothing like reached the limit to which we ought to go in the taxation of foreign imports.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: The statement I intended to have made was that I regarded this proposal for the taxation of corn as not in any shape or form of the slightest use as a fiscal measure. I went on to say that a vast deal more of our revenue should be raised by indirect taxation.

MR. BROADHURST said he knew this was an instalment of a tax that had been demanded for years by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends. Take the meetings of the agricultural asssociations all through the country next Saturday, and they would find this tax would be welcomed in all directions. What did it mean? It meant that it was a tax in favour of the industry of farming and of agriculture. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the fallacy of Mr. Lowe in having stated in abolishing the registration duty of 1s. on corn that it would cheapen bread. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer was under a similar fallacy. It did not always follow that when flour was cheapened bread would be lowered in price, but it always followed that if flour was increased in price, bread was immediately increased in price. So it would be, and so it must be, in the case of bread, when this tax came to be levied. It was absolutely monstrous that the poor of this country should have to pay for the Empire fireworks of other people through the increased want of the necessaries of life which would follow as a consequence of this corn tax. He entirely agreed with the extra 1d. on the Income Tax. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put on 2d. or 3d. It was one of the best, most direct, and most justifiable of taxes if it was properly levied. He would not impose it on any incomes under £500 a year, and he would double it on those of £5,000 and over. The income tax was a splendid piece of revenue machinery if levied according to the means to pay it. That should be the first consideration, and the basis on which the income tax should be worked. He did not think for a moment that the increase on bills at sight — the cheques the people used through the banks—would be imposed. There was not the least doubt that the city would knock it out before it became law. The banking and financial influences were so enormous that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to give way. He disliked the Budget very much. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken another £5,000,000 a year out of direct taxation as he ought to have done. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had fallen on the evil days of departing from his free-trade faith, and that he now proposed to tax the necessaries of the people. Had he held fast to the faith that was in him he would not have proposed this tax, but he had no doubt given way to others. He hoped and believed that this taxation of corn would prove one of the most disastrous strokes of policy that this Government had initiated for many years past.

(7.50.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he would begin by congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his restoration to health. The malady which they all regretted came the more inopportunely last week because it coincided with a malady on the part of the Colonial Secretary. The simultaneity of the recovery of the two right hon. Gentlemen furnished the House with suitable matter of congratulation. It was extremely

inconvenient to be promised a discussion on the Corn Resolution after it had been passed, and it was equally inconvenient to debate the authorisation of a loan of £32,000,000 after the Resolution dealing with it had been agreed to. Those were the only Resolutions for which there was any urgency, and he suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should take the Loan Resolution this evening, but that the Corn Resolution should be taken for a certain portion of the year only, say, three months. That would leave the rest of the year open, and if by any chance, which he certainly did not believe would occur, the Committee should decide against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would still have the remaining nine months in its hands. He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that there was a deficit of £45,500,000, and by the proposals submitted to the Committee that would be met to the extent of £41,600,000; so that there was a gap of close upon £4,000,000 still to be filled up. He heard with the greatest satisfaction the hope expressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that peace might result from the conferences now taking place, and he was also interested to know that the right hon. Gentleman considered the time was drawing near for the repayment by the Transvaal of the money we had spent in conquering the country. He was afraid, however, that the right hon. Gentleman would be disappointed in that expectation. The time would come no nearer until the sovereignty of the Transvaal had been transferred from Mr. Schalk Burger to the British Government, and until that was done this country was not in a position legally to charge a halfpenny on the revenues of the Transvaal. He was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman express a readiness to rebuild and restock the farms destroyed in the course of the war. It was a generous intention, which he was sure the people of this country would respond to.

He had risen to make a few suggestions suggested at the first sight of this Budget. The income tax already provided the Chancellor of the Exchequer with nearly £35,000,000, and the proposed addition of 1d. would raise the amount to £37,000,000. This was a stupendous amount of money to be raised from a single tax, especially when it was remembered that owing to exemptions and abatements not more than half of the taxable incomes were taxed. He held it to be a sound principle never to increase the income tax without endeavouring to spread it over some of those who had not hitherto paid it but who ought to pay it. He was convinced that persons with incomes of £200 and £300 who approved the policy of the war would be ready to pay income tax; and the whole question was how to discover a convenient method by which the tax could be levied upon them. The true method was the smallest possible tax over the largest possible area. The Post Office revenues had shown the great virtue of the penny in point of productiveness. He thought, therefore, it would be reserved for some future Chancellor of the Exchequer, when looking about for further subjects of taxation, to endeavour to apply the penny system to the income tax. When we talked of the extension of the Empire it should be remembered that it was not the Empire that paid, but Great Britain alone; and that in Great Britain it was almost exclusively the richer classes who were made to pay for the maintenance of the Empire. The poor man scarcely paid anything. [HON. MEMBERS on the Opposition Benches: Oh, oh!] He did not say that the poorer man did not pay what was really a considerable portion of his income; but the aggregate sum that he paid was almost infinitesimal, and, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, it constituted a very great danger to the Empire; because when a man voted for war, and was not made to feel the payment for it, he was inclined to vote for a war in regard to which he might be otherwise in doubt.

On one point he agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His ideal for this country was that Great Britain should be an absolutely free port, with no customs duties. But we were now in financial straits, and he was bound to say that he knew of no method by which so large a sum could be so easily raised, and with so little injury to the people, as that adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this case. It must also not be put out of consideration that the tax might be of use in putting us in a better position for bargaining with such a country as, say, the United States in

regard to a diminution of their tariff, because in case of necessity that might be increased.

With regard to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal to raise the stamp duty on cheques to twopence, he thought that a peculiarly mischievous proposal. There was no country in Europe that had so largely availed itself of the cheque system as this country, and the tendency of this tax would be to turn it from the cheque system to a system of transferring money in coin—a tendency which he regarded as a relic of commercial barbarism. He thought he saw a latent purpose in the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to protect the Post Office by this tax, and he imagined that the Post Office had already had too large a share of the business which properly belonged to private banks.

(8.13.) SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We have arrived at a critical moment in the evening, when we ought to come to some understanding as to the progress of the debate. I understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer regards it as desirable, if not absolutely necessary, from the point of view of the public interest, to take the Resolutions regarding the corn duty and the loan to-night. If the right hon. Gentleman gives us that assurance, I hope that the House will not place any impediment in the way of his obtaining these Resolutions, although some of us may, according to our views of the question, be disposed to vote against them. As to the proposed duty on corn, for instance, I would myself vote against the Resolution, but I do not wish to prevent its being taken tonight. I trust, however, that the right hon. Gentleman will be able to promise that on the Report stage we shall have a full and complete separate opportunity of discussing that question. As to the general discussion and criticism of the whole financial position of the country, and of the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, I would venture to submit to him that instead of taking it tomorrow, we should have some longer time to consider it. If we are to discuss with advantage the most important and elaborate statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we ought to know as much as possible what the opinion of the country is upon it, and we ought to have an opportunity of studying it deliberately and most carefully. I trust, therefore, that after taking the two Resolutions that he requires tonight, the right hon. Gentleman will adjourn the general debate to some more distant date than tomorrow.

(8.14.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he regretted very much the absence of his hon. friend the Member for Waterford, but he must on his behalf protest in the strongest possible manner against the Resolution sanctioning the Loan being taken tonight. Everyone recognised that the new taxes had to be passed on the first night of the Budget, but he had yet to learn that the Resolution sanctioning the Loan had the same urgency. Nothing had been said which would justify the assumption of such a position. It was not taken up last year, and he thought it would be a gross abuse to commit hon. Members, as they would be committed if they passed the Resolution, to the extraordinary system of finance which was wrapt up in the loan. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked for an enormous loan, and for an immense margin to play with; and, therefore, when the Resolution was brought forward, hon. Members ought to have a fair and reasonable opportunity to discuss it on its merits. On behalf of his hon. friend the Member for Waterford, of whose views on the matter he had been informed, he strongly protested against the Resolution sanctioning the Loan being taken to-night.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I should like to ask your ruling, Sir, as to the position, because I am very desirous of meeting the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and the convenience of the House generally. Supposing the Resolution in regard to the corn duty is taken tonight, and that the Loan Resolution is taken tomorrow—and I can assure the hon. Member it cannot, without the greatest public injury, be postponed later—[MR. DILLON: Nobody objects to that]—could the debate tomorrow be confined to the Loan Resolution, leaving the general discussion on the Budget to be taken on Thursday, and giving another day, at some later period, for a full discussion on the Report of the corn duty?

Perhaps I am acting beyond my powers, as my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury rather objects to that. Still, I thought that, possibly, the whole of the night would not be required for the discussion on the loan, if the discussion were confined to the loan itself.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The precedent of former years on the Budget was to have a general discussion on the first Resolution, as is usual in the first Vote for the Army or for the Navy. After that, the debate is strictly confined to the Resolution before the Committee, but at the same time, I believe it has been usual to select one particular Resolution, by agreement on both sides, and with the approval of the Chair, on which there might be a general discussion. Therefore, the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be in order.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It seems to me that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a very reasonable one, and would meet the views of the Irish Members, as expressed by the hon. Member for East Mayo. He said he would be perfectly satisfied to discuss the Resolution on the loan tomorrow. You, Sir, have ruled that the discussion must be confined to that Resolution. I do not suppose it will take a very long time to discuss it. Then on Thursday, on the Income Tax, there might be a general discussion on the Budget, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has suggested, and that a day should be fixed later for the discussion on the corn duty on Report. That seems to me to be a very fair proposal.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I ought to add that if, as I think is very possible, the discussion on the loan does not take the whole of tomorrow night, I should be allowed to proceed further with the other Resolutions, of which there are some half a dozen, but not, of course, for general debate. (8.30.)

*(9.0. MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, Rotherham) confessed that, in common with many of his colleagues on the Opposition Benches, he should not have been disappointed if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced his intention of postponing the introduction of his Budget in view of the conference which was at present proceeding in Pretoria. And yet he did not for a moment quarrel with the decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to proceed with his Budget, for he admitted that in a matter of this kind the right hon. Gentleman was the best judge as to what was the right moment at which to bring forward his proposals. He further admitted that putting off the Budget might have rendered the situation liable to this misconstruction—that the enemies of this country, or some of them at any rate, might have suggested that we had got to the end of our financial tether, and that we were faltering in the task to which we had put our hands. Nevertheless, he did not see why the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not have so arranged his Budget that certain of his proposals might, so to speak, have been earmarked with a view that if circumstances required it, those proposals might have been readily dropped without interfering with the general construction of the Budget. He felt sure that many hon. Members would rejoice to hear the announcement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in his judgment, and also in the judgment of Lord Milner, after the 1st of July it might reasonably be expected that a substantial contribution would be forthcoming from South Africa from the mines. He thought that the oftener such pledges were given by responsible Ministers, the better were the chances of such pledges being ultimately fulfilled.

There was one part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which commended itself to his mind much more heartily than any other, and it was that part in which he expressed the desire to give the most generous treatment to those in South Africa who had suffered so severely in consequence of the war. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed his desire to make large money grants for the rebuilding and restocking of farms in South Africa, and he thought that was a sentiment which would meet with cordial approval in all parts of the House. He ventured to say that the echo of those words would be heard

the next morning in Pretoria, and would do much to facilitate that result which they all so anxiously desired. He wished to say a word or two about the doubling of the stamp duty. He submitted that an additional penny stamp upon cheques would disturb very greatly their business transactions. The yield of this tax would be only a very small one, while the irritation would be very considerable. During recent years the use of cheques had been enormously increased in the business of this country, and the French bank manager referred to by the hon. Member for King's Lynn seemed to him to be only fit to be placed in a museum of curiosities, for it was hardly conceivable that any one holding a responsible position in a banking institution should confess himself an entire stranger to and unacquainted with the appearance of an English cheque. The increased use of cheques proves them to be a great convenience, besides which our commercial and banking system effect a great economy by restricting the use of currency. Discourage cheques and every cashier in the country will have to enlarge his till, and provide far more gold and silver than he at present needs. He did not think that remittances would be made with the same alacrity if the use of cheques was discouraged, for there was something in human nature which made it easier to pay an account by cheque than to part with hard cash.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the sugar tax imposed a year ago had been more or less a successful tax, and he had said that the price of sugar in the retail shops had not advanced, or had only advanced to a very small extent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, knew as well as anybody else that the reason of that condition of things was because the fates had been very kind to him, and the abundant harvest enjoyed in beet growing countries had produced this result. The enormous increase in the production of beet sugar had reduced the price, and that reduction had enabled the duty to be paid without any substantial increase in the price to the purchaser. There was another factor which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not afford to overlook, and it was that sugar bounties were at present being paid by continental nations, and when they were abolished next year under the Brussels convention the price of sugar in this country would inevitably rise, precisely to the extent to which those bounties had made sugar artificially cheap.

He was very much interested with the reference made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet to the pamphlet issued by the Cobden Club. He had never heard the right hon. Gentleman say a civil word for the Cobden Club before, but he had now expressed his commendation, of some part at any rate, of the pamphlet issued by that club. He was rather inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet had read the pamphlet only in a cursory kind of way, or else he had skipped over those portions which did not answer his case. He noticed in the pamphlet, for instance, that there were some very strong arguments against the imposition of a tax on corn. It was obvious that any proposal for enlarging the basis of taxation ought to receive the most careful examination, for a tax, once imposed, was no easy matter to get rid of. There was an enlargement of the basis of taxation last year, when the coal tax was imposed, and not a word had been said on the present occasion about removing that impost on the coal industry. He did not complain that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said nothing in that direction, because until peace was once more restored it was unreasonable to expect any diminution in the taxation of the country. In the pamphlet which had been referred to one of the arguments urged against imposing a tax on wheat was because wheat was a necessary food of the people, and one quarter of the population of this country was at present living in absolute poverty. Therefore, it would at once be seen that in their case there was no taxable margin available from which the revenue could be raised. By this proposal those in receipt of the smallest wages were to be hit the hardest. Tables had been put before them by economists showing that in the family budget of the labouring classes 50 per cent. of the income was spent on food, so that any tax on food must hit those classes more hardly than others.

Another objection was that this proposal violated and indeed inverted that sound principle which was first introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire in 1894, that the burden of taxation should be proportionate to the ability of the people who were called upon to pay. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to suggest that this tax on corn was so small in amount that it really would not affect the price at all. Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer seriously argue that the price of bread would remain unchanged if a tax was put upon corn? Somebody must pay that £2,500,000 sterling which the Chancellor of the Exchequer expected that this tax would yield. And if the middleman pays it today depend upon it he will transfer the burden to the consumer tomorrow. The Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared to have argued that the registration duty upon corn was proved not to have affected the price of bread at all, because during the period from January to May in 1869, when the duty was on, the price of the 4lb. loaf fell a halfpenny. But the argument of those who resisted this tax was that the price of the four pound loaf would either have fallen sooner than it did or that the fall would have been larger in amount if there had been no registration duty in former years. He did not know precisely in what month in 1869 the four-pound loaf was reduced by a halfpenny, but it might have been in the month of April. His argument was that if the registration duty had not been in existence the price of the four-pound loaf might have fallen in the month of February and then the people would have got the advantage of the reduction in the price earlier than they did. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the price of bread was fixed by the law of supply and demand, and no political economist would wish to diminish the effect of the law of supply and demand. He would be a very poor economist who did anything of the kind. He was certain, however, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit that if the cost of producing any commodity was increased, other things being equal, its price would rise, and demand for it be proportionately diminished. A diminished demand for bread stuff would mean, of course, that less was being eaten, and if the number of mouths to fill were as numerous as before it followed that more would be hungry after the tax was imposed than before. The duty would be received with enthusiasm by the corn-growing interest, although if there was to be no rise in price such enthusiasm would be hard to justify, but in the great centres of population an outcry against it would be raised. It was a revolutionary and retrograde proposal, and there was great danger that the prospect of peace would so gild the pill as to induce people to swallow just now that which they would reject under other circumstances. It was right and proper that the burden of a great war should be as widely diffused as possible. It was right that all classes should be called upon to make sacrifices when a great national undertaking had to be carried through, and in his opinion there had been no difference in connection with the South African war, in the sacrifices the rich and the poor had been willing to make in allowing their loved ones to go to the front. But when the poor lost their relatives the parallel was no longer the same. It was true that the grief under such circumstances would be precisely the same, but the hardship afterwards would be by no means the same. If the breadwinner of a poor family fell at the front or was maimed during the war, there was imposed on his dependents at home a struggle and burden for the rest of their lives which the rich were not called upon to bear. Therefore the poorer section of the population was entitled to special consideration at a time like this, when it was a question of apportioning the sacrifices entailed by the war equitably between both rich and poor. And it was because he thought a tax on corn inflicted undue hardship on the very poor that he would oppose it, not only in this House but wherever he had the opportunity.

(9.20.) MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said there was nothing in the remarks of the

Chancellor of the Exchequer he more heartily agreed with than when he spoke of the peace negotiations, and that, while willing to do the best we could to secure peace, the best way to secure it was to be prepared for war. The right hon. Gentleman's War Budget would undoubtedly receive the support of the House. He did not approve of all the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but as the money must be found to carry on the war he would support them. He had expected that at least the right hon. Gentleman would announce that he intended to raise the loan of £32,000,000 on the security of the mineral wealth of the Transvaal. He was sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire talk in a rather disappointing way of the mineral wealth of the Transvaal. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman, on the authority of those most competent to judge, that the Transvaal was well able to pay the cost of the war. He was himself a mining expert and his opinion would be taken for what it was worth. He had been to the Transvaal and had examined the country, and as to its resources he was fortified in the opinion he had expressed by Mr. Henry Hays Hammond.

The hon. Member read an extract from a speech by Mr. Hays Hammond, at a date before the outbreak of the war, referring to the enormous benefits that would accrue to South Africa from the gold mining industry under firm rule.

One of the difficulties in the past had been with regard to natives and the illicit liquor traffic. When the natives were able to obtain liquor their labour was intermittent, and it was caculated that under other conditions there would be a saving on this branch of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 per annum. Then, again, there was the dynamite monopoly. That would no longer be the prey of the gang of swindlers who presided over the destinies of the Transvaal. It was said there would be a saving under this head of £700,000 per annum. There would be an efficient system of police, on which a large saving would be effected. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of imposing new taxation, should have proposed to raise a loan of £50,000,000 as a mortgage upon the minerals of the Transvaal. Why should not the gold miners pay for the benefits which would accure to them from British rule? He should like to have heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer an explicit declaration that the minerals of the Transvaal would have to bear ultimately the whole cost of the war.

As to the coal tax, he wished candidly to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the incidence of the coal tax was unfair. As a matter of fact, all that it had brought in to the Exchequer had been lost in the fall in freights and the consequent loss to the shipbuilding industry. In one class of coal in Scotland the lowest price was realised. How, therefore, could the Chancellor of the Exchequer maintain that a tax of 1s. a ton, even if it was fair in the case of a coal fetching 16s. a ton, was fair in the case of a coal that fetched only 8s. a ton? He had all along hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have had something to say on that point. Further, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had scarcely been fair in the manner in which he had dealt with patent fuel. The patent fuel which was manufactured in Wales, and which fetched a high price, had been exempted from the tax, while another similar article manufactured in Scotland was not, notwithstanding the fact that a memorial on the subject, signed by twenty-three Scottish Unionist Members, had been presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(9.33.) MR. ROBSON (South Shields) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had claimed some credit for the fact that, although negotiations for peace were proceeding in South Africa, that was no reason why he should postpone his Budget. It certainly was not. Seeing that we all knew that a new taxation had no relation whatever with the war, the right hon. Gentleman must provide for normal expenditure, and for that alone—for that new taxation was required. We had now to deal with a return to the old policy of taxing food, just as last year we had to deal with a return to the policy of taxing trade. The Chancellor of the Exchequer relied on the old financial policies which were heard in the last generation, and which every one thought were exploded. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that when the registration tax was removed

prices showed no considerable variation, and he asked the House to believe that, because that was so, the removal of the tax had no effect on the price. There could not be a more elementary fallacy. Price was affected by many causes—the right hon. Gentleman said principally by supply and demand. Anything that added to the cost of production permanently of an article affected its price. There might be some fluctuation in the price, and, although those fluctuations might obscure the cost, they would not alter the fact, any more than the law of gravitation could be said to have ceased to exist because a man went up in a balloon. So that the mere fact that this had no effect did not alter the law, which not even Chancellors of the Exchequer could alter, that any addition to the cost of production must mean an increase in price. The instance given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to reduce an argument of the hon. Member for Poplar to an absurdity only illustrated the extraordinary want of consideration and reflection on the part of those who, when they proceeded to tamper with economic laws, apparently never considered either their general operation or their particular effect. The right hon. Gentleman asked, did the hon. Member suppose that if we imported only a quarter of corn, the price of that quarter would be affected by this tax. He had listened with amazement to that suggestion. Let the House suppose on the other hand that no corn was grown, but that it was all imported: would the right hon. Gentleman suggest that the price would not then be affected by this duty? It would all go on to the price; not even the right hon. Gentleman could deny that. The right hon. Gentleman gave another reason for this tax; he said he desired to find a tax that could be conveniently collected, and he gave several arguments in favour of the convenience of the collection of the tax. It evidently did not occur to the right hon. Gentleman that the convenience of this tax was its greatest danger. That would constitute to every other Chancellor of the Exchequer its temptation. Did hon. Members think they were going to stop at a shilling, with our expenditure increasing by millions per annum, and with a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had avowed his determination to vary the incidence of direct and indirect taxation? The hon. Member for Central Sheffield knew that, or he would not be so happy tonight. He knew perfectly well that it would not stop at a shilling a quarter on corn, but would be made to extend to manufactured articles. Did anybody believe that an impost of two and a half millions put on corn would produce no effect on price? He could not understand how the Minister for Agriculture would agree with that. Who was going to pay that tax?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: The foreigner.

MR. ROBSON: Then we did not pay the taxes, and we were only receivers of money from foreigners. As our deficits arose, we must expect to have our Chancellors of the Exchequer telling us how much more we should receive from the foreigner. The foreigner did not pay it. He might pay some part for a time. But it was going to be paid by the English consumer. It was going to be put upon bread, and he asked the House to consider on whom it would fall. The middleman would not merely add to the price of the twopenny loaf a fractional part of a farthing. He would get his tax on his capital back in the shape of an appreciable coin of the realm. Now, taking Mr. Rowntree's figures in his remarkable book about poverty in York, it appeared that there were dependent on less than 18s. a week 474 families, numbering 1,589 persons. Their total income was a little over £274. Of that amount £68 went for rent, leaving less than £207 per week for 1,589 persons, or about 4½d. per person per day for the necessaries of life—not for food alone, but for every purpose except rents. Having regard to food alone, he pointed out that if these people were paupers they would under the workhouse scale be entitled to £21 more, or about £227. Then Mr. Rowntree went on to narrate how these people supplied themselves with necessaries of life, and he said there were two ways, by charity or by starvation. When they required something extra for clothes or fuel or anything else, they had to take it out of their food. He would like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to go down to these families at York—there were hundreds of thousands of persons—and say to them, in his admirable Parliamentary manner, "I fear a great deal of bread is wasted."

In Belgravia it might be, but not among the people Mr. Rowntree described. These people who lived on the margin of existence were the people on whom the tax would fall. And were Members of the Liberal Party to listen in silence and patience to this iniquitous proposal? He hoped that every Member, from his duty to his constituents, and as a humane man who knew anything of the condition of the poor in our great cities, would fight this wicked proposal from end to end. Not only was it bad in itself, but it was welcomed by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as the dawn of a better day, and it was said that bringing corn within the area of taxation would give this country a means for securing commercial advantages. That was the true mind of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The food of the people was to be one of the counters in the game of bungling diplomatists, of whom they had had so much experience in other matters. Never was there a more fatuous delusion of financial heretics than to suppose that you can bully or threaten other nations into financial concessions. If this was to be material for a war of tariffs, then it was not a mere *brutum fulmen* but would be put into practice. The reasons given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer should nerve the mind of every Liberal in the country to opposition by every legitimate means. The Chancellor of the Exchequer mentioned a fall in the price of coal as eminently satisfactory. But this was an effect, he said, the tax be imposed would not have.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I did not say that. I absolutely deny that anything of the sort can be proved. The fall in coal is due to other causes entirely. I said it would not injure the coal trade.

MR. ROBSON said he contested that position; the tax had borne its part in the reduction of price, and he proceeded to give facts in regard to the operation of the tax. The right hon. Gentleman told them that in the German markets our coal held its own. We were certainly still selling coal there; but was the right hon. Gentleman aware that in the best of test markets, that of Hamburg, although the fall in price might be taken to indicate a general fall in consumption, our exports had decreased and that German exports were taking their place?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I can show a decrease in both. Unfortunately, I have not the figures with me tonight, but I can show them to the hon. Gentleman.

MR. ROBSON said he would deal with the right hon. Gentleman's figures, when he produced them. They would then see over what area he calculated his percentages. He had not the figures, but from his recollection of them he could tell the right hon. Gentleman that the monthly returns some months ago showed that English coal was being displaced in the test market of Hamburg. The right hon. Gentleman wound up his remarks on the coal tax by saying that, if it had caused a decrease in exports, that would be no reason for repealing it. That meant that a tax laid upon a trade which had the effect of contracting its area was, according to the present financial principles under which they were governed, no reason for repealing it. He ventured to say it was the one all-sufficient reason for repealing such a tax. So they now understood—and he hoped it would not be forgotten—that the taxation of trade and of food was among the cardinal points of Tory policy precisely as it was in the past. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet had stated that they were behind the times, but he had really done an injustice to his own Party. The bulk of that Party had never altered their views with regard to Protection. At every election since he (the hon. Member) had had any connection with English public life, at which the Tories had invited the suffrages of the people after a period of Opposition, they had made Protectionist promises, though they had never kept them until now. With regard to the income tax, he did not intend to go into any financial argument, but he desired to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the irritating manner in which the Treasury agents throughout the country were collecting this tax. In his own constituency, men of undoubted position and of the best financial standing had had the bailiffs walking into their houses without notice, in some cases even where there had been no refusal to pay, and seizing part of the furniture.

He was quite willing to give the right hon. Gentleman names, and he mentioned the matter in order that if this procedure was the result of any general order from headquarters, that order might be modified.

(10.18.) SIR HOWARD VINCENT expressed his gratification at the initial statement of the right hon. Gentleman that it was not intended to diminish in any way the pecuniary resources of Lord Kitchener in carrying on the war. That was undoubtedly the most satisfactory statement that could come at the present moment from the Treasury Bench, and could not fail to have a material effect on the early conclusion of peace and the settlement of affairs in South Africa. It was also satisfactory to note that the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised that, although peace might come in the early future, there would not be any great cessation of expenditure for some little time to come. The war expenditure in South Africa was in the most capable hands, as Lord Kitchener supervised every detail himself, and so long as Lord Kitchener was at the head of affairs the Committee might rest assured that not a single sixpence would be wasted.

He had no intention of going into the details of the proposed new taxation. The Committee could not have failed to be impressed, not alone with the sincerity and honesty of the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but also with the great desire of the right hon. Gentleman to take the House of Commons entirely into his confidence, and to tell them exactly the state of affairs. The right hon. Gentleman had repeatedly laid before the House the dangers of increasing the normal expenditure of the country. In the last forty years the expenditure had risen from about £70,000,000 to the £180,000,000 or £190,000,000 now required. A portion of that was, of course, war expenditure, but there could be no doubt that the ordinary expenditure of the country had gone on increasing. It was, therefore, absolutely essential that the basis of taxation should be widened in every possible way.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): And the expenditure, if possible, reduced.

Mr. Robson.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (continuing): And the expenditure, if possible, reduced, but there was great difficulty in reducing expenditure. When his hon. friend the Member for Oldham had been longer in the House, he would see that the great pressure upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not to reduce but to increase expenditure, that great pressure came not from one quarter only, but practically from all quarters of the House and country. It was, therefore, only right that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should lay before the country the enormously increased demands it was necessary for the present and future Governments to meet, and the necessity, if possible, of enlarging the basis of taxation.

He would say but a very few words on the increased taxation. For his own part, he thought it would have been possible to raise with the greatest ease a larger amount from increased taxation. The payers of income tax were lucky to be let off with an increase of only a penny. He was by no means in favour of a large income tax, but it could not be denied that many people thought that income tax should provide a very large proportion of the taxation of the country. Undoubtedly this tax weighed extremely unfairly upon many people, especially upon small professional men and those in small industries, and it was gratifying to have an indication that when the war was over a substantial reduction of the income tax might be looked for. As regarded the stamp duty, he did not altogether agree with the right hon. Gentleman's proposals. He had always understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be of the opinion that it was not worth while to impose a tax unless it produced a substantial amount. Whether the amount estimated to be produced by this additional tax would be sufficient compensation for the great annoyance it would cause was a matter of considerable doubt.

Then as to the registration fee on corn. There could be no better opinion than that of the late head of the late head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade. Sir Robert Giffen had recently written a letter to *The Times* on this very subject, in which he said—

"We have only to go back to a date just before these wanton sacrifices of indirect

revenue began which have landed us in our present difficulty—that is a date prior to the Gladstone Government of 1869–74. . . . No taxpayer one has ever heard of ever recognises himself as better off by the repeal of the 1s. a quarter upon grain."

That was the opinion of Sir Robert Giffen, who was in no way concerned with the politics on that side of the House, but who had given a lifetime to the study of the question. After hearing the opinions which had been expressed by hon. Members on the other side of the House he could not help quoting the opinion of the leading article of *The Times*—

"The great value of Sir R. Giffen's letter is that he is able to disengage himself from the causes of financial conditions and to look political and economic facts in the face as they exist at the present day, and not as they were accepted, in the character of unalterable axiomatic truths, thirty or forty years ago."

It was to be hoped that hon. Members would adopt that freedom of mind, and look at facts as they were now and not as they were thirty or forty years ago. It would, no doubt, be possible to obtain a certain amount of cheap applause on the platform by speaking against this tax, but he did not hesitate to say that when he met his constituents, as he intended to do, they would approve of the course taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They would recognise that it was only the ordinary toll which every article in the neighbourhood of Sheffield paid to go into the Corporation market—that it was a toll which foreign corn would pay to come into the markets of this country for the use of those markets. It was not protection. It was merely a means of raising money which had been advocated on many platforms in urban constituencies, and he had no hesitation in saying that the majority of the people of Sheffield would approve of the tax a. being one of the best ways which could possibly be devised for raising moneys But, although he approved of it, he confessed he did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone nearly far enough. He would have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman had been able to see his way to make some distinction between foreign and colonial grain, which, he thought, would have done a great deal to bind the Empire together and bring about that commercial federation which was the only means of preserving the Empire in the future. He believed that the taxation of foreign manufactures would conduce to our financial and industrial prosperity, by recreating again that supremacy which this country once enjoyed and which, unfortunately, it had lost in some considerable measure.

(10.31.) MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I rise for the purpose, not of taking any prolonged part in the debate that has arisen on this Budget, but because I think no time should be lost by those who represent Ireland in this House in entering their protest against this demand of further taxation upon the people of Ireland. The House must excuse me if I commence by repeating a remark which I have made on many occasions such as this in the past. It is one of the commonplaces of English statesmen in dealing with Ireland to say that we ought to congratulate ourselves upon the fact that a poor country like ours is associated in partnership with a great and wealthy country like England. How does this work out in practice? We see the great fact that we are bound to this country and forced to pay a share, and as we believe an unfair share, of those enormous Imperial expenses which are entered upon by this country, and in which we have practically no concern whatever. I suppose this is the largest Budget ever proposed in the English Parliament. The amount is well over £200,000,000, and it is necessitated by a policy which is absolutely repugnant to the bulk of the people of Ireland, and from the success of which they can derive no possible benefit whatever. The voice of Ireland in this House has always been heard on the side of economy. I remember in the debate we had last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer lamented the days had gone when statesmen of different periods advocated a policy of economy, and he said he thought there was no party of economy left in this House. I may remind him that the representatives of Ireland in this House have always raised their voices in the interest of economy, and in spite of that the expenses of the empire have

gone on increasing at a ratio which is absolutely appalling, and we, because we are bound up with this country by the Act of Union, are bound to pay an exorbitant share, as we believe, of those extravagances into which the empire is forced by a policy we disapprove of and oppose. All this time, while the increase of the expenditure of the empire has gone on, Ireland's prosperity has been diminishing. In this country you are able to bear increased taxation, and you are able to regard with some degree of equanimity the enormous increase year by year of your budget. Your population is increasing and your prosperity has been increasing by leaps and bounds, but in Ireland our population has been going down, and certainly by comparison with any other country in Europe our prosperity has been declining, and yet all this time our taxation year by year has been increasing. Although it may seem to many old Members of the House like repeating an oft told tale, yet we are bound to repeat on every occasion of this kind some of the facts connected with the over-taxation of Ireland. A Commission in the year 1895 appointed by this House, and consisting in the majority not of Irishmen but of gentlemen belonging to Great Britain, came to the conclusion that on the figures for the year 1893–94 Ireland was overtaxed according to her relative taxable capacity as compared with this country to the extent of £2,750,000, and that figure was arrived at on a supposition which, I for one always regarded as a false supposition, that the amount which Ireland ought to pay to Imperial charges according to her taxable capacity was one twentieth of what England ought to pay. I believe that was a false figure. I believe that one thirtieth or one thirty-fifth rather than one twentieth is the correct figure. But taking one twentieth as correct for the sake of argument it was shown that we were overtaxed that year £2,750,000. What has happened since? According to the figures for 1893-94, which were the figures taken for comparison, the taxation of Ireland amounted to £7,500,000. Since then £3,000,000 has been added to the taxation of Ireland, and to-day we are asked to agree to a Budget which will still further increase the unjust burden which is cast upon our country. Therefore, we who represent Ireland in this House are bound on every occasion such as this to raise our voices against any taxation which increases the financial burdens under which we suffer. As to the methods of this new taxation I shall say very little. I am not inclined to agree with the hon. and learned Member for South Shields. He is an upholder of the war; and if so, he ought not to be afraid to put upon the shoulders of those he represents a fair share of the burden of the war. The complaint I make against the Chancellor of the Exchequer is this—he boasts that the bulk of the people of this country approved of this war; and if so, why has he not the courage to put the bulk of its cost upon those who were in favour of it? He has to make up a deficit of £41,000,000 and he raises a beggarly £5,000,000 by direct taxation and the balance he raises by loan. That is neither an honest nor courageous policy. If the bulk of the people are in favour of this war, the bulk of the increased taxation necessary to carry on the war ought to be put upon the shoulders of the people who approve of it. What is the case in respect to Ireland? Even the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not pretend that the bulk of the people of Ireland approved of the war. He knows perfectly well that the bulk of the population of Ireland abhor this war and regard it as a most unjust and iniquitous war, and that if they had the power they would refuse to pay a sixpence towards the cost of it. Yet he proposes to put on us an unjust burden of taxation in support of it. It would have been far more honest and courageous on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he had put not a penny but 6d. on the income tax, and instead of raising a loan to meet the bulk of the £4,000,000 deficit he had put the entire amount of that taxation upon the people. Then we should have seen whether Gentlemen like the hon. and learned Member for South Shields approved of the policy of the war when he went down to address his constituents on the subject. I have risen, not to take up the time of the Committee in discussing the Budget, but for the simple reason of voicing Ireland's protest. We protest against it, first,

because we pay an unfair share of the taxation, and we protest against it also, and chiefly, because the bulk of the taxation is one we absolutely disapprove of. There is one thing upon which I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, and that is that in the proposals of this terrible Budget he has not apparently concealed anything—he has put the full truth before the people; and if he had only been consistent and shown what this war was costing in money to the people of England—if he had gone further and put the cost upon their shoulders—I should have thought better of him. With reference to the tax on corn, we in Ireland are differently situated to you in England. There is no doubt that the free trade which was productive of so much benefit to this country has been little short of a curse to Ireland, and if this duty gave any protection to the Irish agricultural industry, which is unfortunately the only industry Ireland has left, it might be a serious responsibility for us to take up an attitude antagonistic to it. But this is so small a thing that it cannot help our agricultural industry in Ireland. It is a very sad thing to say, but it must be confessed that a certain portion of the population of Ireland largely subsists on meal and flour, and even a small increase in the price of the staple food stuffs may amount to something like disaster to Ireland. But apart from that consideration we take a clear, intelligent resolution that we object to pay for a war which we regard as unjust, and which we believe future generations of Englishmen would look upon in the same manner as we do.

(10.47.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I do not think that the complaint about Ireland, so far as the income tax is concerned, is reasonable, because the new taxes will hardly fall on the Irish people at all. The Budget is, I consider, a very bold measure on the part of the Government. I am a free trader in every sense, and have always been so. I represent a very dense population.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): "Natural selection."

MR. BARTLEY: If I have made any remark that is unparliamentary, I am very sorry; but I represent a very densely populated district, and I am bold enough to say that the great bulk of the people approve of the war, and inasmuch as they profess to approve of the war, I accept the principle that they should in a small degree, even if they are poor, help to pay the cost of it. There is a sort of fetish worship in the objection to any taxation of the people. The speech of the hon. Member for South Shields showed exactly what we have to put up with. No doubt the corn duty will be used all over the country as an attack on the food of the people; but a shilling duty on the quarter of imported corn would only represent the half of a farthing on the 8lb. loaf, which probably would have to be paid by the middleman. I think the twopence on cheques is a mistake, and will lead to a great deal of irritation for a very small sum.

SIR JOHN KINLOCH (Perthshire, E.) said that the tax on grain would be most objectionable from the point of view of cattle feeding farmers in Scotland, who bought enormous quantities of maize and other feeding stuffs from America.

(11.1.) MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had selected the least of the evils among which he had to choose. He had not listened to the seductive whispers which urged a borrowing Budget. He had held firmly to the principle that no new borrowing should be undertaken unless accompanied by the imposition of new taxation. As for the stamp on cheques, the proposal which seemed to have excited the most disapprobation, he thought it ought to be welcomed as a step in the direction of taxing those elusive forms of personalty which had so long escaped their proper share of the public burdens. The increase in the income tax was, no doubt, a source of grave concern to all of them. Nevertheless, taking the propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a whole, he was inclined to think the House would admit that they were the best that could have been made in the circumstances. What were those circumstances? A visitor from another

planet, who made himself acquainted with our Budgets since 1880 and saw the rise in expenditure which characterised that period, culminating in an extraordinary upward bound in the last three years, would probably ask what great accession to the national wealth had taken place in those three years. If he were told that the only new asset had been the existence of a costly colonial war, he probably would return to his own planet with a peculiar idea of the intelligence or even the sanity of this nation. He was not, he observed, attacking the war expenditure. How very different was the present rate of increase of expenditure as compared with our former experience. Let him take three six-year periods. In the six years before 1890 the increase was £4,500,000; in the period from 1890 to 1896 the increase was £13,750,000; and from 1896 to 1901–02 the increase was no less than £36,000,000. Thus the increase in the first period was 5 per cent.; in the second period 15 per cent.; and in the third period 36 per cent.

These were facts which, however stale, ought to be brought to the notice of the country on every occasion. He held that these increases were out of all proportion to the national enrichment, and that there was no adequate explanation or excuse. But, however explained, this grim fact remained, that the cost of government was nearly half as much again as it was seven years ago. Did anyone suppose that it was half as good again? Side by side with the increase in the Imperial expenditure and the march of indebtedness, municipal expenditure and indebtedness, no doubt encouraged by Parliament, had gone on increasing all over the country. It had been said that this was a wealthy country. No doubt that was so; but there were also very poor people in the country. This extra taxation might, in the case of the poor and distressed, interfere with the comfort of their homes. When the Committee extended their view over the last seven years, the prospect was still more unsatisfactory and alarming. They had yet to deal with the Finance Act of 1894, of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire was so proud. That Act ought to have been modified or amended by the Conservative Government. Today it imposed on the taxpayers of this country a burden of about £14,000,000, as against £7,500,000 which was the product before the passing of the Act. All that had been swallowed up mainly by an increase in normal expenditure, as well as by the war expenditure. That showed how absurd it was to institute any comparison between what was happening now and the financial policy of Mr. Pitt. In the days of Mr. Pitt, by the most austere and rigid economy, and by adopting every shift to keep expenditure down, nearly the whole, and in some cases actually the whole, of the yield of the war tax was secured, and not as in the present day frittered away, or at any rate consumed in domestic expenditure. So much for the past. The question which now immediately arose was—did the people complain? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said this afternoon that there was no falling off in the consuming power of the people, and no diminution in business at home, that we were living in a time of great prosperity, and that our prosperity was ministered to by the wealth of neighbouring nations. There had been many years of peace and plenty in Europe, and many years of light taxation at home. America had been developed, and the application of scientific invention to industry had continued. All these facts had so accumulated wealth in the world that there was a great reserve fund, and a fine inheritance for extravagant or imperious hands. The income tax payer thought that the money was wanted for the war, and his public spirit would not allow him to grumble while the war was going on. The glut in the sugar market covered the imposition of the sugar tax, and the great gamble in the coal trade the year before last favoured the imposition of the export duty. But these things were not going to last. Let hon. Members think of the lean years and the evil days of reaction which in the next five or six years might threaten the prosperity of the country. There was a revenue of £150,000,000 for ordinary domestic purposes, and if the details of the Estimates might be challenged, at least as much might in justice be said as to their distribution. How were they distributed?

The resources of the British Government were not unlimited. They might be as vast as even Sir Robert Giffen conceived them to be, but they had their limits, although they were not easy to ascertain accurately. But those limits should be respected, and to transgress them was to incur swift automatic retribution. Therefore, the question which all who advocated retrenchment should take up was, not that of gratifying the demands of Departments, but of adjudicating between those demands. It was no longer a question of the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service having all they wanted, as one would think to hear some people talk. It was a question of spending a limited although vast income to the best possible advantage.

He wished to ask if at the present moment there was any effective direction of expenditure, any holding back of some Departments in order that others might have their enterprises put forward. Everyone knew there was nothing of the kind. They looked in vain to the constitution of the country to find any machinery or force which could effect such an accurate allocation. It was not much good looking to the country itself, because the country could only judge of grave issues at infrequent and very often uucertain intervals. In the House? They were told with convincing force by the Leader of the House the other night that the control of the House over Supply had practically passed away. He thought it had inevitably passed away, and that Supply was now brought before the House, not that it might be controlled, but in order that certain questions of administration might be discussed. They could not look to the House of Commons, therefore, to arrest and apportion expenditure. There was not much good in looking to the Press to arrest the progress of expenditure. The Press merely exaggerated popular caprice. There was no good looking to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, except when he was also the First Minister of the Crown. There was only one force which could make the necessary allocation of public expenditure, and that was the Cabinet, controlled by the Prime Minister, who in the Party system of the country very often stood as a surety for certain great principles and as a guarantee that the King's Government should be carried on in an orderly and honourable manner. That was the only force that could be depended upon. Something no doubt was desperately done by the Treasury. He wished hon. Members to understand clearly what the Treasury was. There was an opinion abroad that the Treasury had certain statutory, or even constitutional powers, apart altogether from the ordinary government of the country. Ultimately however, the control of the Treasury was neither more nor less than the influence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet. Of course, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were able to persuade the Cabinet that what he considered the maximum of taxation should be accepted, naturally the Treasury would be in a very strong position in dealing with Departments, the heads of which had all signified their acceptance, as Cabinet Ministers, of that standard. Sometimes a Chancellor of the Exchequer was overruled. He did not say that that had happened. He did not venture to insinuate that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been overruled, but he hoped that he had, from the point of view of the position he would occupy in history. Something was done by the Treasury, but in the main we drifted, and the result was—he hoped the Committee would forgive him for putting these matters forward with such assumption, but he felt he would not be able to bring them forward in any very apologetic tone—that there was a lack of proportion in the distribution of expenditure between different objects, without any regard to their relative importance. He would take the greatest and most notorious instance, namely, the ratio observed between the Naval and Military expenditure of the country. No one, however great an enthusiast, not even the Duke of Wellington—he did not mean the great Duke but the present Duke—not even the Secretary of War himself, would deny that the Navy was much more important than the Army to an Island Empire, yet we spent an equal proportion of our national resources on both. Surely that was an anomaly. Let them look at other countries. Germany, like Great Britain, was a country which required two defensive weapons, but, unlike Great Britain, her primary weapon of defence was her Army, her secondary weapon being her Navy. The German Army was to Germany what the British

Navy was to England—a matter of life and death. Germany was anxious above all other nations to increase her Naval strength, but she did not make the mistake of making her secondary weapon compete with her primary weapon, and she was spending three times as much on her Army as on her Navy. Then, again, France more than any other nation approached the conditions of expenditure in which England stood. She aimed at being a first-class Naval and Military Power. The result was that in 1870 her Army was found to be unequal, and her Navy was thought to be unequal as recently as 1898. France appeared to be making an unwise disposition of her forces, but she had spent twice as much on her Army as on her Navy. There was no nation, look where we might throughout the whole world, which spent as much on its secondary as on its primary weapon of defence. He ventured to think that if one examined the details of expenditure and saw where the money was actually spent, a great many more facts not less striking than the present ratio between Naval and Military expenditure would be discovered.

He should like to say a few words about the manner in which we were spending, roughly speaking, £150,000,000 for domestic purposes. Did any one suppose that we were going to stop there? He would name to the House three different causes of increased expenditure which would have to be met in the immediate future. First of all there would have to be an increase in the pay of the Navy. We had increased the pay of the Army, and we were now calling for more men for the Navy, and their pay would have to be increased. There was also certain to be an increase for primary and secondary education, and there would also be an increase in expenditure due to the garrison in South Africa. That last-mentioned expenditure had been estimated by people who did not take too gloomy a view to be about £10,000,000 a year. It might very easily be more, unless the peace which was now being made was one which would command the acquiescence of the Boers. There were one or two other considerations which would arise as soon as the war was over. The Sinking Fund would have to be revived—he thought they were all agreed about that—and the income tax would have to be reduced. He held that the Income Tax pressed more heavily than any other tax. It pressed upon the brain workers of the country, but that was no reason for its reduction, as it was the elbow of the country in time of war, and could meet ordinary fluctuations on the Budget without adding to the cost of collection or dislocating any trade or industry. After the war we would have to meet new and possibly large demands out of resources diminished by the revival of the Sinking Fund and the reduction of the income tax, and would have to meet them during a period when we would not have the patriotic stimulus due to the war, and when very likely the good trade conditions which now prevailed would be absent. What would it come to? The basis of taxation would have to be broadened, and he thought it well that the Committee should realise that further expenditure meant serious taxation of bread and meat and other necessaries of the food of the people. He held that if the basis of taxation were further broadened, two gigantic issues would be raised. In the first place the fair trade issue would be raised. A tax which in the first instance would be honestly imposed solely for the purpose of revenue would, no doubt, under the influence of the hon. and gallant Member of Central Sheffield — not less gallant in the field of economics than in the field of war— became Protective in character, for the hon. and gallant Member would say, why not kill three birds with one stone —raise the revenue, support British industries, and consolidate the Empire. He wondered what would happen if the fair trade issue was openly raised by some responsible person of eminence and authority in the country. They would stand once more on the old battlefields, with all the old broken weapons, and amid grass grown trenches and the neglected graves of heroes who had fallen in former conflicts. Party bitterness would be aroused such as the present generation could furnish no parallel for except in the brief period of 1885-6. He wondered how the advent of such a tremendous issue would affect the existing disposition of political parties. These were questions for the

future on which he would not, however, detain the Committee, but the time would come when they would have to be answered.

There was another issue, and one not less important, even more important, which would be raised if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were called upon to increase taxation beyond its present limits. Let them indulge in no illusions. Perhaps a Chancellor of the Exchequer with great power—he did not mean any reflection on his right hon. friend—and with the demand of the country for retrenchment behind him, would come; yet he would not be able to pull down expenditure which had bounded up nearly £40,000,000 in seven years by more than £7,000,000 or £8,000,000. All that economists should work for was to insist that the sums now voted should be made to meet the demands of the near future, and that the present expenditure should be kept stationary. In 1885 the suggestion of a £100,000,000 Budget was scouted as a wild idea. A £100,000,000 Budget was now ancient history. We had a £150,000,000 Budget for domestic expenditure, and a £200,000,000 Budget loomed portentous in the future. He could quite conceive such a Budget being extremely popular, and supported by the enormous mass of the voting strength in the country, but he wondered who would pay. That was a serious question for hon. Members on his side of the House. Was it seriously to be supposed that the democratic electorate of the country in time of peace would accept such a burden? He made no aspersion on the patriotism of the people. He thought the Government had received unflinching and unselfish support from the masses of the people in connection with the war. By the courtesy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he had been able to verify the figures showing the ratio between direct and indirect taxation. They showed that, as the franchise had been extended, the proportion of direct taxation to indirect taxation approached more and more closely. Direct taxation was increasing, and indirect taxation was getting less and less. Two years ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that we had succeeded in establishing a financial equilibrium between direct and indirect taxation, but last year, for the first time in the history of the country, direct taxation amounted to 52 per cent. of the total, and indirect taxation to only 48 per cent. Did not that show in the most convincing manner that any attempt largely to extend indirect taxation would run counter to some very potent instinct far down in the hearts of the people? To "broaden largely the basis of taxation" would raise not only the fair trade issue but something much more formidable than a political issue; it would raise an issue directly social.

By way of recapitulation he would say that the increase of £40,000,000 in the cost of governing the country during the last six or seven years was not to be explained by the indulgence of the Government in new ideas, or by the assumption of new functions of government. It had not been governed by any just sense of proportion in distribution; and he very much doubted if there had been any proportionate corresponding gain in efficiency. It had been largely, if not mainly, due to a more open-handed administration of public Departments, resulting from the confusion of our finances due to the war and from a shocking lack of Cabinet control. We had reached the extreme limit of practical and prudent peace time taxation, and unless effective means were taken to curb and control the growing expenditure of the country, we would be confronted with important social, economic, and political problems, which might be most dangerous to the country and the Empire, and very damaging to many causes which the Conservative Party held near and dear to their hearts.

(11.42.) MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said he did not wish to follow the hon. Member who had just spoken into the general question of the expenditure of the country, but he should like to explain the reason why he objected to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put a tax on corn, and why he intended to oppose it at every stage. They had just listened to an eloquent speech in favour of general economy in the management of the finances of the country. There was no doubt that in the minds of some it was thought to be a certain advantage

to put on a tax which would be felt by everyone in the country, but he regretted very much indeed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have selected for that purpose the particular article he had.

In the first place, a tax on wheat was a bad tax in itself. It was a tax which pressed most hardly upon those who were least able to bear it. Those who were most dependent upon bread were the people whose incomes were the smallest. That class might contain the largest number of voters, but it also contained a large number of people who had no votes at all. Every widow, every soldier's wife, living on the allowance considered by the Government sufficient for her support and that of her children, had to spend a much larger proportion of her income upon bread than those in more comfortable circumstances. He regretted the tax for that reason, and also because it was a revival of the evil custom which we got rid of fifty years ago of imposing protective duties on the food of the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared, no doubt honestly, that it was not a protective duty, but when the people of the country read the debate which had taken place and saw who were those who had accepted with pleasure and gratitude the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, it would be difficult to persuade them that the tax, at all events in its future results, if not in its immediate effect, would not be protective to a very large extent. It was protection of the worst kind. According to a rough calculation made at the moment, it appeared that about £300.000 would be taken from the food of the people and given to the producers of wheat—the farmers and the landowners. The total amount which the agricultural producers would get was, of course, more than that—probably about £1,300,000. With regard to barley and oats, it was not so serious a matter. It was to the taxation of wheat, which was the food of the people. and especially the food of the poorest of the people, that he objected. The tax was being levied in such a way that out of the amounts paid by the people in the increased cost of food, a certain proportion would go, not for the support of the general taxation of the country, but into the pockets of a particular class of inhabitants. He sympathised as much as anyone could do with the difficulties of farmers and landlords, but it could not for one moment be asserted that they were not as a class distinctly superior in wealth and comforts to many of those upon whom would press most hardly any tax upon corn, and consequently upon bread. It had been asserted that the tax would be paid by the foreigner or the middleman. Taxes could not be obtained, by any manœuvring, out of other countries. Especially was that the case with regard to wheat. The only way in which any portion of an import tax could be obtained from other countries was by the consumption being diminished. If an import tax diminished the consumption, then to a certain extent it diminished the demand and might diminish the price abroad. But the peculiarity of wheat was that if the price was increased the consumption was not thereby diminished. If the price of bread were increased, so far from the people eating less, large numbers of them would eat more, because their surplus being diminished, they had less to spend upon meat and other forms of food. No por-

tion, therefore, would be obtained from the foreigner; the whole of the burden would fall upon the people of this country.

He would not go further into the question at the present stage. The speeches from economists to which the House had listened would come in far more usefully in the discussion on the expenditure of the country, rather than in connection with the raising of the money made necessary by that expenditure. He looked forward to the time when the war would be ended, as all hoped it would be soon, with honour and credit to this country, and with good feeling towards our opponents, and when he hoped a serious attempt would be made to reduce the expenditure of the country. He would oppose the imposition of this tax upon the food of the people, because he believed it to be in itself wrong, socially wrong, and that it would raise social feeling in the country. In addition to that, there would be interested in its maintenance large numbers of people in the country who might prevent the tax being taken off in the future. For these reasons he regretted the step which had been taken, and would oppose it at every stage.

* (11.55.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: We have had, as is always the case upon the introduction of the Budget, a debate ranging over a great variety of subjects; but of all the speeches delivered, I confess the most interesting to me has been that of my hon. friend the Member for Oldham. It was, to my mind, an admirable and eloquent speech, and, though there are parts of it I could criticise, and statements in it which I think, if time permitted, I might question, yet, taken as a whole, I welcome it most sincerely as some aid to me in what I think even my hon. friend must admit to be the extremely difficult task of keeping down expenditure in such times as those in which we live. I can speak now from an experience of seven years as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and no one but myself knows the arduous, continuous, disagreeable nature of the duties of that office in attempting to control expenditure, and nobody but myself knows how much I have succeeded, or how much I have failed, in this. But this I do say most sincerely — that I welcome the assistance of my hon. friend, as I have often welcomed the assistance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, and of all Members of the House who will regard something more than the popular outcry of the moment for expenditure upon this or that hobby of the day, and who will look at the expenditure of the country as a whole, and will, as my hon. friend has rightly said, endeavour to weigh the different classes of demands for expenditure one against another, and have the courage to refuse what really ought not to be acceded to at all.

My hon. friend has referred to a point which was also referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth. The right hon. Gentleman was anxious to obtain a statement of the amount of the new taxation which has been imposed during the last three years for purposes of the war. I think I laid on the Table last year a statement on that subject, but I will refer to it, and will endeavour to see that the information the right hon. Gentleman desires is presented to the House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The expenditure in the year just closed?

* SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Quite so. It should be, I think, for each year, so as to show, as far as possible, how much of the taxation has gone for the war. But let me say this. It is extremely difficult, when, as in several cases of this new taxation, the increase of taxation has not been by way of a new tax, but by way of an addition to an old tax, to decide precisely how much of the increase of taxation is due to the addition to the tax and how much to the growth of the old tax itself. I think the more satisfactory statement would be to take the taxation of the country each year as a whole, and show how much has gone to ordinary expenditure and how much has been devoted to the purposes of the war. I will endeavour to put such a statement before the House.

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford has, with perfect consistency. stated that he was opposed on two main grounds to the proposals of this as to the proposals of former Budgets. In the first place, he considers that Ireland pays an unfair share of general taxation. Well, that is a subject I have often attempted to argue in the House, and on which I have always found myself in direct opposition to the hon. and learned Member. I will not attempt tonight to deal with it further than to say that in regard to this, as I think I have shown in regard to former Budgets, though I entirely admit that Ireland has had to bear increased taxation in these later years, yet the proportion of increase is much less than that borne by Great Britain, and will, I believe, be found to disappear altogether, if you consider how much of it is devoted to what may properly be called Imperial purposes. I demur, therefore, to the view taken by the hon. and learned Member, and those who sit around him, as to the grievance of Ireland in this respect. But the hon. and learned Member took another objection. He said that he and those whom he leads, object altogether to the war for which the increased taxation and borrowing proposed in this Budget is mainly required, and that we ought to put the taxation for the war on the people who approve of it. I do not think, if the hon. and learned Member attempted to apply that doctrine to Great Britain, that he would find it a practicable or a reasonable policy. You cannot allocate taxation for a certain purpose to those who approve of that purpose, and relieve those who disapprove of it. That is obvious. What he really means is that the majority of his fellow-countrymen in Ireland, in his opinion, disapprove of the war, and that, therefore, Ireland should not contribute to it at all. That is a separatist doctrine, to my mind, in which, I am afraid, I am quite as far—if not farther—apart from the view of the hon. and learned Member, as I am on the other subject.

The main criticism of the Budget tonight has not been on the increase of the income tax, or even the increased duty on cheques, though something has been said on the latter subject, but on the proposed new duties on corn and flour. Those have been objected to on different and sometimes almost contradictory grounds. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth and

the hon. Member who has just sat down did not trouble about what I endeavoured to argue, the practical side of the question. They object to the tax in theory. They assume without the slightest reason—I defy them to prove it—that the old registration duty on corn and flour increased the price of bread. Until that is proved, I will venture to say that all this talk of the increase in the price of the food of the people, of its being a protective duty to home producers, of its putting, as the hon. Gentleman who last spoke suggested, a large sum into the pockets of the owners and occupiers of land in Great Britain and Ireland, are propositions which it is unnecessary to argue. When you have shown that this tax caused an increase in the price of bread, then I think there will be something to be said for the arguments which have been adduced against the tax.

But there have been other arguments. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford referred to this tax, and used a very curious argument. I thought he was going to approve of it. He said he thought that free trade had been an absolute injury to Ireland, but he could not support the duty I have proposed because there was so little protection about it. He went on to argue that he was also opposed to the duty because it would increase the price of cheap meal, which was much consumed in Ireland. I do not know whether that is protection or not, but the duty cannot be open to objection on both these grounds. Then the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar, who is an authority on this subject, admitted that it was a good tax while it lasted, so long as it was devoted to paying off debt; but why it should be a bad tax to re-enact again now that it is proposed for the purpose of avoiding debt is an argument I entirely fail to understand. Then the hon. and learned Member for South Shields made an impassioned oration against the duty, very like that which he delivered against the coal tax last year. I feel now, as I felt then, that if he has made up his mind that the tax will have the effect which he anticipates, I cannot wonder at his violence, and I could not convince his prejudices. Some of the arguments that have been addressed to the Committee against the duties on corn and flour remind me of my old friend "the thin end of the wedge." I can remember in my younger days in this House, when I was a Member of a Party which was always in a minority and perhaps occasionally addicted to rather out of date opinions, that "the thin end of the wedge" argument was a very favourite one indeed. A proposal used often to be objected to because of what it might lead to; and so this little duty which is suggested tonight, which when it existed was never considered by Mr. Gladstone or Sir Robert Peel as in any practical effect protective, now is considered to bear all the worst marks of protection, not because anything practical can be alleged against it, but because my right hon. friend the Member for Thanet gave it his benediction, as a tax for revenue, and then went on to express his wish that it might be made much heavier, or turned, as my hon. friend the Member for Sheffield would desire, into a beginning of colonial preferential taxation. How so small a tax could be usefully trusted on preferential lines I

really fail to see. These, however, are matters which do not affect the rights or wrongs of the proposal. I only ask that it may be fairly considered and dealt with on its merits in accordance with its previous actual history, and not according to prejudices which belong to another order of things altogether. I hope that after the discussion of this evening we may now be allowed to take the Resolution.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he had not discovered any serious opposition to the addition to the stamp tax. He thought it was one of the most worrying and annoying impositions.

(12.10.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 254; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 108.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplain, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart

Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas

Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michael (Lond. Univ.)
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.

Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill

Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N. W.)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.)
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth

Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees

Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareh'm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred

Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (D'mfriesshire
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)

Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy

Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, James

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier

Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hon J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty

Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H (Sheffield

Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (T'nt'n
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—

Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James

Burke, E. Haviland-

Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal

Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone

Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher

Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harmsworth. R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Holland, William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.

Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael

Kearley, Hudson E.

Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mather, William
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John

Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur

Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.

Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton (Linoln)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips

Ure, Alexander

White, George (Norfolk)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd

Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—

Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. M'Arthur.

Resolved, That there shall be charged on and after the 15th day of April, 1902, the following customs import duties.

	£	s.	d.
Corn and grain of all kinds, and peas, beans, and lentils the cwt.	0	0	3
Flour and all kinds of meal and prepared grain, starch, and all farinaceous and starchy substances used as articles of food the cwt.	0	0	5

Resolution to be reported tomorrow, Committee to sit again tomorrow.

Adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 15th April, 1902.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificates from the examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order.

And also the certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Cornwall Electric Power.
Erdington Tramways.
Finedon Urban District Water.
Newport Corporation.
Reading Gas.
Shepton Mallet Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY (NEW LINES) BILL [H.L.].

A petition of Messrs. Travers, Smith and Braithwaite, and Robinson, of 4, Throgmorton Avenue, London, Solicitors, praying for leave to present a petition of Kinsman Hitchens and others, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next, in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition.

NOTTINGHAM CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 13th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

LIMPSFIELD AND OXTED WATER BILL.

Committed.

MIDLAND COUNTIES JUNCTION RAILWAYS (SALE) ACT, 1901 (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the day for the Second Reading read, and discharged. Ordered, that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

SUTTON BRIDGE DOCK BILL [H.L.]

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the day for the Second Reading read, and discharged. Ordered, that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

BROMLEY GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

BROADSTAIRS GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (KINGSTON-UPON-HULL) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to order).

ISLE OF WIGHT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

SCOTTISH EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [H.L.],

STREET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL WATER BILL [H.L.],

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

BARKING GAS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

PETITION.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE.

Petition of the Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India, and the Isles of the British Seas, under their Common Seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for placing the Imperial Institute under the management of the Board of Trade, and for other purposes; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.

The Spion Kop Despatches.

LOCAL TAXATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Final Reports of His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of local taxation, in so far as relates to (1) Ireland; (2) Scotland.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.

Minute by the Board of Education sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, for the city of Bath. (Third Minute.)

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899.

Rules for retreats licensed under the Acts in Scotland, approved by the Secretary for Scotland on the 14th April, 1902.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON WATER BILL.

The evidence taken before the Joint Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered except to Members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 40.)

THE LATE LORD KIMBERLEY.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LORD PRIVY SEAL (The MARQUESS of SALISBURY): My Lords, before we go to the business I think it is proper that I should say a few words to note the very great loss which this House has undergone since we parted for the holidays. The death of the Earl of Kimberley is a sad mark in the annals of this House. His position here was very peculiar He enjoyed great influence, and had a power in this House more than he perhaps had in other parts of the country, but his loss is a very great one because of the peculiar position which he occupied and the great influence he enjoyed here. One of the great peculiarities of his position was that he wholly belonged in a public sense to the House of Lords. I have been trying to think, but I cannot remember any other case of a Leader of this House who was never in the House of Commons.

*EARL SPENCER: The Earl of Rosebery.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I forgot Lord Rosebery. Lord Kimberley was a man marked out by great qualities of a peculiar kind. He was a man of great intellect, great learning, great knowledge of public affairs, and almost unequalled experience, and he invited intercourse with all men by the kindness and affability of his manners and his great personal popularity. I think, however, his marked peculiarity was his singular impartiality in public affairs. I do not say that he was absolutely impartial—under our system of government that is impossible, and I suppose that a man who is absolutely impartial can bear no leading part in the administration of our form of government—but if he was not absolutely free from all bias, he came as near it as, I think, any man whom we have listened to and followed in this House. He could not have been absolutely free from bias; if he had been, he would have been like some public men who lost their influence simply because they were never for a long time on one side or another. That is not the way our system of politics works. But the peculiarity of Lord Kimberley was that, while he was sufficiently a Party man always to be faithful to his Party, and regarded and followed by them with great devotion, he never allowed it to be seen, either in his conduct or his public utterances, that any bias of any kind governed him. He had the art of maintaining the appearance and the reality of great impartiality; and the reality was greater than the appearance, because he always could select the point on which it was possible to lean without appearance of bias or partiality, and yet that would be the point which brought him into close connection and harmony with the school of thought to which during the whole of his life he was devoted.

Lord Kimberley was a Whig, and in the presence of the noble Lord opposite I dare not say the last of the Whigs, but he had all the peculiarity and all the honour which attaches to fidelity to that school. He consequently enjoyed an influence out of all proportion to the more brilliant qualities which have given

predominance in this House or the other. He was followed not only by those on whom he could have called for a partisan vote, but he always had an influence largely in excess of that given by his Party position. Again and again I have by experience noticed how powerful his influence in argument and in division was in this House, even on questions and at times when the predominance of his Party was not assured. We cannot part from him without a deep regret at the ability, the character, and the honour we have lost, and without feeling that if our somewhat inexplicable system of Party government is to succeed, it can only be because there shall be from time to time in this House, and in the other, men whose fidelity to Party ties and to the Party school of thought is yet so tempered by fairness, impartiality, and honour, that they will always enjoy an influence considerably in excess of that which their natural political position would confer on them. I feel that we have suffered a very serious loss, and I trust that in the future we may from time to time have men whom we shall regard with the same feelings of affection and the same trust with which on all sides of the House we have regarded the Earl of Kimberley.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I rise to follow the noble Marquess in the very admirable remarks which he has just made with regard to our friend Lord Kimberley. We must all rejoice when we find that the traditions of this country with regard to Party controversy have been maintained and exemplified. I refer to that feeling in Party politics which, after a bitter contest may have occurred, enables all acrimony to disappear, and opponents who may from time to time have been in active controversy admit with generosity the good qualities of their opponents, and state them frankly in this House. Long may that state of things last! It is a thing we are proud of in this country; and we thank the noble Marquess for having so generously and clearly expressed those views in what he has said about one with whom he has often been in active conflict, and with whom he has had argument, always fearlessly expressed by Lord Kimberley, but in a way not to rouse feeling on this side in this House. We approach the subject possibly from a somewhat different standpoint. We knew Lord Kimberley not only as a great Parliamentary figure, but also as a private and political friend, and with more knowledge than possibly the noble Marquess or those opposite had. We have had a terrible loss. We have lost an able counsellor, a fearless Liberal. Whether he is the last of the Whigs or whether he was only a strong Liberal I do not know, but he was one who never advanced views of whose justice he was not convinced, or views which he thought would not conduce to the benefit of his fellow-countrymen. No doubt he often differed from the noble Marquess and noble Lords opposite, and sometimes he expressed those views in strong terms, but I doubt whether he ever did so in a manner which gave offence to your Lordships.

The noble Marquess truly said that we very rarely have had in this House a man of such great Parliamentary experience. The whole of that experience was connected with your Lordships' House. He had a very long experience in administration. Fifty years ago he was a member of Her Majesty's Government, and from that time to the last few days before his death he took the deepest interest in politics and public affairs. I heard the other day from his son that up to within a few days of his death Lord Kimberley, with that keenness and clearness of mind which always characterised him, followed not only the debates in Parliament on public measures, but actually had the debate on the last public measure of the Government—namely, the Education Bill—read to him *in extenso*, and he discussed the measure. I mention this to show his deep interest in public affairs, and how his whole life was surrounded and imbued with a devotion to public duty. We have probably had more eloquent men in this House; but his learning and classical education were always conspicuous in the language he used and in the sentences with which he adorned his speeches. He was singularly clear-minded, and he had an extraordinary talent for mastering details. That gave him a power of mastering Bills in Parliament which few in this House or in the country are aware of. He was a typical Englishman in many ways. I

need not refer to his love for sport. He was a very keen sportsman, an excellent shot, and in his last days he referred with the greatest possible affection to his hunting when he was young. He was a bold and fearless rider. In country affairs he was an exemplary landlord. He took an ntelligent interest in agricultural questions, and was not only a liberal, but a critical, landlord. He was beloved by his tenantry; he took part in all county business. For many years he was Chairman of the Board of Guardians in his district of Norfolk, and I believe he was Chairman of the County Council. His great power and ability were bestowed on these local affairs just as much as they were on public affairs. This knowledge and experience gained in local and county affairs added greatly to his weight, influence, and ability when he faced what may be called the higher duties of public administration Lord Kimberley occupied nearly every great office in the State, and, from what I have heard, he left behind him, at each office which he filled, the highest possible reputation as an administrator. His own people admired his activity, assiduity, and loyalty to all interests, and, whether at the India Office, the Colonial or Foreign Office, all those remarkable qualities were eminently shown.

I would refer to one particular point which always struck me very much in considering Lord Kimberley's character. It may not be known that naturally Lord Kimberley was an exceedingly impulsive man; but, though he might take an impulsive view of any subject brought before him, he never allowed that view to prevail until he had tested it by his common sense and acuteness of mind, and no one will say that Lord Kimberley ever rashly undertook anything or rashly supported any policy with which he was connected. Another point in his character was one which we all admire and must remember—and that was his determination to do his duty even at personal risk. I would allude to two occasions, which, probably, are familiar to some of your Lordships, and which will illustrate this point in his character. In January of 1894 the Government of Mr. Gladstone had carried through in another place a very important measure of local government, which is generally known as the Parish Councils Act. At the time when it came to this House, early in January, Lord Kimberley was ill, and my noble friend behind me, the Marquess of Ripon, was entrusted with the management of that Bill. He introduced that Bill, and it got the Second Reading, I think, on January 25th, and the Bill went into Committee on February 1st. On February 1st Lord Kimberley undertook the charge of the Bill. Perhaps it is not known to your Lordships that a very few days before—I have this on the highest authority, namely, that of the physician who was called in—as late as January 16th in that year, Lord Kimberley was in a most dangerous state of health. He had had a violent attack of pneumonia; his temperature was abnormally high, and there was a good deal of difficulty in controlling him, because he was delirious, and the doctor considered that he was in considerable danger of his life. A few days after this, Lord Kimberley declared that it was his duty, and that he must come to London to take charge of the Bill. The physician said to him, "Well, I do not know how to control you, but if you were a poor patient of mine, in hospital, I would say that you must not rise from your bed for a month." But so determined was he, and so convinced that it was his duty to be here, that he came to this House, as your Lordships know, and conducted, in a most master ul way, one of the most complicated measures that ever came before your Lordships.

Another occasion was, I think, a very pathetic one, for it was the last occasion on which my noble friend ever appeared in this House. I believe it was on February 14th, 1901, when he was here for the last time and made his last speech. It was on the occasion of the debate on the Address to the King after the death of Queen Victoria, and those who had seen my noble friend a few days before were perfectly aware of the state of his health. He was exceedingly ill, and he was exceedingly emotional, and those who had seen him before he came to the House felt the greatest anxiety. Personally, I never went through greater anxiety than when I sat by him listening

to him on that occasion. But, owing to his determination and his mastery over himself, he was able to get through that duty, which was one that few men in the state of health he was in would have undertaken, and it was done at great risk of his life. I might dwell on other points of the noble Earl's character, but I have, I think, said enough to show how great, in my opinion, is the loss of Lord Kimberley to this House. We have lost not only a great friend, we have lost an able and experienced counsellor. We hope that his memory will long remain before the country, and that others may, from that memory, be urged to emulate his high honour, his great industry, and his great toleration, combined with fearlessness. I feel that when we are alluding to him tonight we may say with perfect truth that we have lost not only a very great statesman, but that we shall with difficulty find his equal—one who shall be such an honour to the country and of such assistance and credit to your Lordships' House.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I need scarcely tell your Lordships that I do not rise under any belief that I could add anything to what has been said so admirably by the Prime Minister and by my noble friend who has just sat down. But, as I believe that I have been associated with the late Lord Kimberley for a longer continuous period in political and private friendship than anyone now living in this House, I cannot resist adding a few words by which I may express how cordially I agree with all that has been said by those who have preceded me. There is but one further remark I would desire to make, because it points to a characteristic of Lord Kimberley to which, I think, allusion has not yet been made, and which, I think, was very remarkable, and very well known to those who enjoyed his intimate friendship. I have never known, in a long life, any man so perfectly free from all taint of self-seeking as was Lord Kimberley. He had a natural ambition—an ambition which it was proper and right a man of his powers should feel—to attain a position in which those powers might be exercised for the benefit of his country; but I venture to say that throughout the long course of my connection with Lord Kimberley I never recollect—indeed, I may say I know there never was a single occasion upon which, in considering any complicated public question that came before him, he thought for one moment of how the course which he was likely to take would affect his own personal position. He looked to the public interest, and to that alone. It may be partly, perhaps, owing to this that he enjoyed, as the noble Marquess has said, in this House for some period a greater reputation than he did in the country, for he never sought popularity, and he never resorted to the means too common for attaining that object. He looked to the public interest. He was content to do his duty. He grew, I think, in the estimation of the public down to the day of his death, and I doubt not that hereafter men will look up to him as one of the brightest examples of an English statesman.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order); Amendments made; Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 41.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 15th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GRAND JUNCTION WATER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

TICEHURST WATER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL.

"To regulate the expenditure of money by the London County Council on capital account during the current financial period; and the raising of money to meet such expenditure," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (SOUTHPORT AND CHESHIRE LINES EXTENSION RAILWAY TRANSFER) BILL.

Order [17th March] that the Bill be committed, read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn (*Mr. Caldwell*).

RICHMOND HILL (PRESERVATION OF VIEW) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the Liverpool Corporation Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; that the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of the Petition of the 'Metropolitan Dairymen's Society' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the London and India Docks (Lighterage Rates, etc.) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of the Petition of 'Richard Fairbairn and others' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought not to be dispensed with."

First two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

BIRKENHEAD, PRESTON, SALFORD, AND EASTBOURNE CORPORATION BILLS.

The Deputy Chairman, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion, the Birkenhead, Preston, Salford, and Eastbourne Corporation Bills, though unopposed, ought to be treated as opposed Private Bills.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the London and South Western Railway Company to execute further works, to acquire additional lands, and to raise further money; to empower the Company and the Great Western Railway Company, or one of them, to acquire additional lands for enlarging Portland Station; to confirm a lease to the Company of the Padstow separate undertaking of the North Cornwall Railway Company, and an agreement made by the Company with the Vicar and Churchwardens of the parish of St. John, Waterloo Road; to extend the periods limited for the completion of works and the purchase of lands under certain Acts relating to the Company; and to confer further powers upon the Company; and for other purposes." London and South Western Railway Bill —[Lords].

LONDON AND SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Stourbridge, against; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Worksop, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HONORARY FREEDOM OF BOROUGHS EXTENSION BILL.

Petition from Kensington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (REPAYMENT OF LOANS) BILL.

Petition from Kensington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Kingston-on-Thames; Shipley; Burslem; Worksop; Wiltshire; and Sydenham; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against: From Woodhall Spa; and Calne; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Bo'ness, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Doncaster; Drayton; and Horncastle (two); to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petitions against establishment: From Carnoustie and Inverkeithing; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Wells and Wigan; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA (DESPATCHES).

Copy presented, of the Spion Kop Despatches [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1901 [by Command] to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 to 1899 (RULES FOR RETREATS) (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Rules for Retreats licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, in Scotland, dated 14th April, 1902, approved by the Secretary for Scotland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 142.]

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Minute of the Board of Education, dated 26th October, 1901, sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, for the City of Bath [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report No. 353 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1900) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CYPRUS.

Copy presented, of Annual Report for 1900–01 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

(3.30.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is any news to communicate from South Africa.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No, Sir, there is no information, nor do I think there can be at the present stage. I may say that the Government will immediately inform the House as soon as there is anything which can be communicated.

Concentration Camps—Maintenance Charges.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the calculations that have been made for the purpose of charging the Boers who have fought against us in the field since the 15th of September, 1901, with the maintenance of their families imprisoned in the concentration camps, credit has been given to such Boers for the value of the food supplies of their families which have been taken posses-

sion of or burnt by the British troops; and, if not, whether, in view of such destruction of the food supplies of the Boer women and children, such credit will be given.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I am not aware of any such cases as are suggested in the Question, but, if they exist, I should not feel inclined to interfere with the discretion of Lord Milner in the matter.

Transvaal and Orange River Colony Law.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the alterations recent'y made in the law of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony have been made by His Majesty in Council or by Lord Milner; and, if by the latter, under what constitutional precedent or authority does he act.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The alterations have been made by Lord Milner under the authority of the Royal Commission printed at page 7 of Cd. 547.

Tweebosch Engagement—Conduct of Yeomanry.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the statement in Lord Methuen's Report on the action at Tweebosch on 7th March last, namely, that he found the men forming the rear screen, which consisted of the 86th Company Imperial Yeomanry, much out of hand, and lacking both fire, discipline, and knowledge of how to act; and if he can say when and under what conditions the men forming the 86th Company Imperial Yeomanry were recruited, what length of training they received prior to embarkation for South Africa, and what previous training the officers of this unit underwent.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): This Company formed part of the second contingent of Imperial Yeomanry which was sent to South Africa in accordance with Lord Kitchener's wishes, and has done twelve months service there.

CAPTAIN NORTON: The noble Lord has not answered the Question as to the length of training they received before embarking for South Africa.

LORD STANLEY: I am afraid I cannot say exactly, because a good many of the companies have been broken up. We have endeavoured as far as possible, whenever sending Imperial Yeomanry out, to conform with Lord Kitchener's request as to the training of them.

Pay of Colonial Troops.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the men recently recruited and now being recruited in Canada and the Colonies are to be paid 5s. per day; and, if so, whether similar recruits in the British Isles will be paid at the same rate.

LORD STANLEY: These men are paid at the same rate as the Imperial Yeomanry.

30th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the position of the 30th Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry, who were enlisted in January on the understanding that they would proceed to South Africa after two months training, but who are still at Bulford camp, without any immediate prospect of being moved; and whether, in view of the fact that the men of this battalion were enlisted at 5s. a day for special war purposes, and that the period of engagement was for only twelve months (three and a quarter of which are already consumed), he will endeavour to make use of a force raised at such cost to the public.

LORD STANLEY: This battalion is being retained at home until it is thoroughly trained, in accordance with Lord Kitchener's request that the Imperial Yeomanry should be well trained at home prior to despatch. The period of service is for twelve months or the war.

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): And are these men receiving 5s. a day, although they are not in the sphere of operations?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Don't embarrass the Government!

Imperial Yeomanry Serving at Home.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state how many Imperial Yeomen, at 5s. a day, are now being employed at home.

LORD STANLEY: These men are required to have two months service and to be efficient in order to qualify for pay at 5s. a day. I am not aware how many are in receipt of this pay.

Imperial Yeomanry Training at Aldershot.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been brought to his notice that there are only some 1,500 horses for the purpose of training the 5,000 Imperial Yeomanry at Aldershot, and that of these horses nearly 400 are not available owing to sickness, some having been actually sent to Aldershot while suffering from strangles; also that a large proportion of the officers with these battalions are promoted troopers, who have not at present had experience in training men; whether he is aware that several of these Imperial Yeomanry battalions are short of medical officers, veterinary officers, farriers, and shoeing smiths; and what steps he proposes taking to remedy these defects with a view to the efficiency of this force.

LORD STANLEY: Of the 1,500 horses about 280 are sick, and not 400. It must be remembered that one battalion of Yeomanry has been sent to Bulford to train, where horses are provided. Some of the officers are promoted troopers, and have been selected on account of their being likely to become good leaders of men. I am aware that there is a deficiency of the officers and men mentioned, and every effort is being taken to meet it. As many horses have been assigned to the Yeomanry as the General Officer Commanding considered desirable.

Yeomanry Officers' Allowances.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the facts that the subaltern officers of Imperial Yeomanry raised for service in South Africa are in many cases entirely dependent upon their pay, and that this pay is 7s. 8d. per diem, without rations, which are provided on active service, whether he will either grant them the Militia allowance of 4s. 3d. per diem while in England, or employ them, as originally intended, in South Africa; and whether he will take care that no cost of moving these troops about from one garrison to another in England falls upon the officers.

LORD STANLEY: The Militia messing allowance—which is 4s., and not 4s. 3d.—is not granted on embodiment. The officers will receive the usual allowances should it be found necessary to move them from one station to another. As soon as possible after the units to which they have been posted have completed their training, they will be despatched to South Africa.

Telegraphists in South Africa.

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a detachment of telegraphists who volunteered in May, 1900, for service in South Africa on the same terms as the Imperial Yeomanry and Field Service Volunteers, are still detained in South Africa; and whether, as these men have now been on active service nearly two years, he will make arrangements for their relief.

LORD STANLEY: May I refer my hon. friend to my reply to a similar Question put yesterday by the hon. Member for the Western Division of Newington.†

War Clasps.

MR. McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the fact of any officer or man having passed through

† See page 130 of this volume.

Cape Colony, the Transvaal, Orange River Colony, or Natal, on his way to join any of His Majesty's forces, entitles him to a clasp in respect of each of these colonies; whether a man who has proceeded from the Cape to Natal, and has seen active service in both Cape Colony and Natal, can only receive one clasp in respect of both these colonies; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of allowing men to hold both the Natal and Cape Colony clasps if they have seen service in both colonies.

LORD STANLEY: No soldier can hold both the Cape Colony and Natal clasp; further, a soldier holding a battle clasp in a colony cannot hold the colony clasp. It is not contemplated to make any change in the Regulations affecting the issue of the South African medals and clasps.

MR. McLAREN: The noble Lord has not answered the first part of the Question.

LORD STANLEY: No, I am afraid I overlooked that.

MR. McLAREN: I will put it another day.

Naval Gunnery Practice—Prizes for Marksmanship.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether Petty Officer Grounds, of H.M.S. "Terrible," who last year accomplished the feat of putting eight hits on the prize-firing target in one minute from a six-inch quick-firing gun, while his ship was steaming past at twelve knots, received any special monetary reward for this skill; and whether, having regard to the fact that the King's prizeman at Bisley obtains a monetary prize of £250 and a gold medal and badge, the Admiralty will consider the advisability of instituting some national prize to be competed for each year by the captains of the guns of His Majesty's Fleet.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The sum of £21 15s. was placed at the disposal of the captain of H.M.S. "Terrible" for distribution in prizes for firing with the six-inch gun. The petty officer referred to received his proper share of the amount allotted to the gun's crew of which he was the captain. The conditions under which heavy gun firing is conducted in the Royal Navy are such that it is not considered possible, even if it were desirable, to institute a prize similar to the King's Prize competed for by the Volunteers at Bisley. Every effort is made, by the offer of money prizes, and by taking advantage of the *esprit de corps* and rivalry prevailing between different ships, to encourage gunners in the Navy to obtain proficiency in gunnery. There are objections to any attempt to put the gunnery of the Fleet on the lines of a military rifle competition.

Navy Clothing.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can give the reasons which have caused increases in the prices of clothing materials, such as serge, flannel, duck, and twill, used in the Royal Navy; and if he can see his way to reduce the prices of these articles to the previous figures.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The prices at which clothing materials are issued to the men are revised every three years. They are arrived at by taking the average of the prices actually paid by the Admiralty during the previous three years, to which is added five shillings to cover establishment charges, losses, condemnations, etc. Any rise or fall in the prices charged to the men is the result, solely, of the rise or fall in the prices paid by the Admiralty. It is, therefore, impossible now to reduce the present prices without a loss to the Crown.

Navy Pay.

MR. HARMSWORTH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the forthcoming increase in the pay of private soldiers, it is in contemplation to make a corresponding addition to pay of the bluejackets, stokers, and marines of the Royal Navy.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As stated in prievous answers the question of the pay of the Royal Marines is under consideration. The circumstances under which the other Naval Ratings referred

to serve are so dissimilar to those prevailing in the Army, that, in the opinion of the Admiralty, the question of their pay must be considered as altogether independent of Army rates. No changes in the rates of pay in Naval ratings generally are in contemplation.

Accident on Board H.M.S. Mars.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can give the House any information concerning this accident.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Information has been received from the Vice-Admiral commanding the Channel Fleet, and from the Rear-Admiral at Queenstown, with respect to this lamentable occurrence. It appears that while at gun practice a misfire took place in both the forward barbette guns of the "Mars." Orders were given to use the auxiliary firing circuit. Four minutes later an explosion took place in the port gun, by which the breech-block was blown to the rear, the projectile remaining in the gun. The Starboard gun remained unfired. Every one in the barbette was killed or wounded. I regret to say that the number of those who were killed, or have since succumbed to their injuries, is eleven, including Lieutenant James Bourne and Lieutenant Thomas Miller, and nine men. Mr. Geoffrey Cowlard, midshipman, and six petty officers and seamen were also injured, and are being treated in hospital at Queenstown. No explanation of the explosion can at present be given, but an inquiry has been ordered and will take place immediately.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): Inquired if adequate provision would be made for the relatives of those who had been killed in the unfortunate accident.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That will be done, but the Question can perhaps be dealt with after longer notice.

Armenian Affairs.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Diarbakir has been sent again to Moush this year; whether His Majesty's Government have any reports indicating the renewal of massacres in Armenia; and, if so, whether they are taking any steps alone or in conjunction with other Powers to avert the danger.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The British Vice-Consulate at Bitlis has been re-established and His Majesty's Consul at Diarbakir is now residing there, his duties at Diarbakir being fulfilled by another Officer. Moush is in the Vice-Consular district of Bitlis and within easy reach of that town. The reports received by His Majesty's Government indicate that a disturbed state of affairs exists in some of the Vilayets, especially in the Hekkiari district, but there is no evidence pointing to the likelihood of a renewal of massacres. His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has recently on three or four occasions called the attention of the Porte to the matter.

Macedonia.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that orders have been issued to the Valis of Salonica and Monastir to arm the Mussulman civilian population; and whether representations have been or will be made to the Sultan by His Majesty's Government urging him to discourage such measures, with a view to allaying apprehension and preventing misunderstanding.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government have not heard that any orders of the nature referred to have been issued by the Porte. The most recent instructions issued by the Grand Vizier to the Valis in Macedonia are to the effect that regular troops and police only are to be used for any repressive measures which may be necessary, that the civilian population are on no account to be employed for such a purpose, and that the Mussulman population must not enter into any conflict with their Christian compatriots.

European Turkey.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now communicate to the House, either as a Parliamentary Paper or in reply to a Question, the text of the Circular Note recently addressed by the Powers to the Porte with reference to the condition of European Turkey; and whether he will lay upon the Table copies of the Reports addressed to Sir Nicholas O'Conor during the past twelve months by His Majesty's Consular officers in Macedonia.

LORD CRANBORNE: No such Circular or collective note has been addressed by the Powers to the Porte. His Majesty's Ambassador, as well as the representatives of other Powers, have, however, been in frequent communication with the Porte as to the condition of Macedonia. It would not be desirable in the public interest to present Papers to Parliament at the present moment.

Philippine Exports.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state what is the amount of export duty paid on manila fibre or hemp from the Philippines to America and England respectively, also the duty charged on the same goods entering the United States, and what proportion is remitted by reason of such goods coming from an American colony, and what advantage in first cost the American manufacturer would have over his British competitor.

LORD CRANBORNE: Manila fibre and hemp are not the same thing, and are differently treated. Under the United States Tariff Act, hemp is subject to an import duty of 20 dollars per ton, but grasses and fibres, including manila, are duty free. The export duty under the act of the Philippine Tariff Commission is the same in both cases, viz., 7.50 dollars per ton. But all articles, the growth and product of the Philippines, admitted into United States ports free of duty, will, if they come direct and are for use and consumption in the United States, be exempt from export duties imposed in the Archipelago. It appears therefore that no export duty will be levied on manila fibre exported to the United States and that the American manufacturer has in this case, in his own market, an advantage of 7.50 dollars per ton over his British competitor.

MR. MARKHAM: Arising out of that answer, as the noble lord has stated that the Government have sought an assurance from the United States Government that no preferential tariff shall be established, will he make a friendly communication to the United States Government in order to remedy this state of things under which there is a preferential tariff.

LORD CRANBORNE: I stated that representations had been made the last time the hon. Gentleman put a Question on this subject. I must ask him to give me notice of any further Question.

Russian and French Ships at Morocco.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have information to the effect that the French and Russian Governments have ordered the meeting of Russian and French Squadrons at Tangier; and, if so, whether their information shows that such meeting has been concerted with the Spanish Government, and what is the object of such action.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Minister in Morocco reported the contemplated visit of a Russian and French Squadron to Tangier and their arrival there on the 10th instant. They were expected to remain for twenty-four hours. His Majesty's Government have no information to the effect suggested in the last Question.

Co-operative Stores and the Income Tax.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Army and Navy Co-operative Society, Limited, the Junior Army and Navy Co-operative Society, Limited, the Civil Service Co-operative Society, and other trading wholesale and retail co-operative societies throughout the United Kingdom, are assessed to Income Tax in the same manner as other trading companies and individuals are assessed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I will send the hon.

Member a printed statement, which explains the law on this point. I may, however, mention that the general impression that these societies are exempt from Income Tax is erroneous.

Stamps on Medicines.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in cases where penalties under 42 George 3, c. 59, for selling medicines without affixing the stamps in payment of duty required under that Act, are not recovered by process of law, but are claimed by, and paid direct to the Inland Revenue authorities, the informer is entitled to any portion of such penalties; and if so, to what portion; and whether, if the informer is a Government official, he is entitled to a similar, or any portion of the penalties.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The Board of Inland Revenue are empowered to grant rewards to informers, whether Government officials, or otherwise, in cases of the kind referred to. The amount awarded to the informer depends upon the circumstances of each individual case.

Budget Proposals—Corn and Grain Duty.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his intention to treat existing grain contracts of *bonâ fide* traders in the same way that he treated similar coal contracts last year.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir, certainly not. The circumstances are quite different. The position of the grain contracts is precisely that of the sugar contracts last year, and the matter is governed by the provisions of Section 10 of the Finance Act of last year.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): What goods are included under the heading of grains, flours, and meal? Does it include all cereals, such as peas, haricots, lentils, and rice, and also manufactured goods such as macaroni, semolina, starch, tapioca, sago, and arrowroot.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I only received notice of this Question as I came into the House. Longer notice should, I think, be given of a detailed notice of that kind; but, subject to that observation, I think I may safely say the answer is, Yes.

Islington Poor Rate.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received any communication from the Islington Borough Council with reference to alleged extravagance on the part of the Board of Guardians; and whether, considering the increase of the poor rate in that parish, he will be willing to grant an inquiry into the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I have recently received a letter from the Borough Council asking that an inquiry may be held with reference to the expenditure of the Board of Guardians. I am at present in communication with the latter body on the subject.

Kew Gardens.

MR. McLAREN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if his attention has been called to the number of crippled, stunted, and half-dead coniferous trees in Kew Gardens which are no longer properly representative of the species to which they belong; and whether he will suggest to the managers of the gardens the desirability of removing all such trees and replacing them by young stock, providing them so far as possible with the soil most suitable for their special requirements.

I beg also to ask the First Commissioner of Works if his attention has been called to the complaints of the pollution of the air near Kew by the smoke-producing factories at Brentford, and to the complaints that the Urban Council of Brentford neglect or decline to suppress the nuisance; whether his attention has been called to the injury done to evergreen trees and shrubs in Kew Gardens by the smoke-laden air; and whether he will consider the feasibility of instituting proceedings against the offending parties.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The cultivation of coniferous trees is not attended with success in the northern part of the gardens owing to the smoke of Brentford; but it is already carried on in the southern part on the lines suggested. The matter referred to in the second Question is receiving most careful consideration.

Central Telegraph Office Staff.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that duties which have been defined as proper to the class of senior telegraphists and overseers at the Central Telegraph Office are frequently performed by men not belonging to that class; and whether he will consider the advisability of increasing the number of senior appointments at the Central Telegraph Office to meet the requirements of the service.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): So far as the Postmaster General is aware, it is not the case that duties which have been defined as proper to the class of overseers and senior telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office are frequently performed by men not belonging to that class, though this does occasionally happen when there are more absentees than usual amongst the seniors. In present circumstances the Postmaster General is not able to entertain the question of creating more senior appointments.

National Income and Expenditure Accounts.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state why no copies of the accounts of the national income and expenditure to 31st March last, which were supplied to and published in the daily newspapers of the following day, have been or are distributed to Members of this House; and why no copies of these accounts are obtainable at the Vote Office.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In accordance with what I find has been the usual practice, copies of these accounts were not sent to the Vote Office on the 1st of this month, because the House was not then sitting, and Members would see the statement in the Press before they could receive it from the Vote Office. I have, however, given directions that copies of the last accounts shall be at once placed in the Vote Office, and that in future copies shall always be sent to the Vote Office, whether the House is sitting or not.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Can it not be arranged to forward them to hon. Members' addresses?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That does not rest with me. I believe hon. Members can obtain them by signing the Pink Paper.

Goods Rates on Irish Railways.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the average rate per ton on merchandise carried by railways in England, Scotland, and Ireland has been calculated, and shows that in 1880 the excess was 21·83 per cent. above the English rate, and 27·13 above the Scotch; in 1890 the excess was 22·75 above the English, and 29·22 per cent. above the Scotch; and in 1900 the corresponding percentages were 37·14 and 33·97; whether any steps will be taken by the Government to reduce the cost of transport in Ireland, where there is an average difference of almost £2 per ton in the carriage of goods; whether he will cause inquiry to be made into those figures with a view to providing a remedy.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The figures are as stated, except that the average difference in the cost of carriage of goods on British and Irish railways is 2s., not £2. It should be observed, however, that the proportion of expenditure to receipts on Irish railways is higher than on the Scottish lines, and almost as high as on the English railways. The rates in Ireland are presumably within the legal maxima which

the companies are authorised to charge. In reply to the concluding inquiry, I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to the Question put by him to me on Tuesday last.†

Police Protection at Faha.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of policemen employed in the protection of Mr. Morrogh Bernard at Faha, County Kerry, the yearly expense in salary and otherwise of these policemen to the public, and the yearly rents of the farms from which tenants have been evicted by Mr. Bernard in the district.

MR. WYNDHAM: Two constables who, when not employed in protecting Mr. Bernard, are engaged on other police duties. Their emoluments amount to about £162 a year. I have no information on the last query.

MR. MURPHY: But is it not the fact that ten policemen are engaged in protecting this man, in an area not exceeding a square mile?

MR. WYNDHAM: Not ten, but two.

MR. MURPHY: Well, I am personally aware that ten are so engaged.

Kerry Police.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the expenses of the police hut kept in Ballyferriter, Dingle, County Kerry, are charged upon the rates of the county.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to this Question is in the negative.

Irish National School Teachers.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when the national teachers are likely to be paid the balance of the residual grant, 1900-1901.

MR. WYNDHAM: Payment of the grant for the period mentioned has long since been made.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the consolidated salaries of all Irish national school teachers have been finally determined; whether special consideration has been given to all cases where the average of three years income would be inequitable; and whether he proposes to institute any change in the constitution of a Board which has failed, after two years, to finish this work.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first and second queries is in the affirmative. The suggestion that there has been remissness on the part of the Board in determining the salaries of the teachers is not warranted by the facts.

Education Bill.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, although the Elementary Education Act of 1897, relating to necessitous school districts, is left unrepealed by the Education Bill, the effect of the Bill will be that, where such a district is absorbed in a county, the district will lose the whole benefit of the Act of 1897, although it will retain the entire burden of building debts from which that Act at present partly relieves it; and, having regard to the fact that, unless the entire county should be necessitous within the terms of the Act, the money at present paid over to the district will be unissued and the Act a dead letter in such counties as may put in force the permissive powers of the Bill, whether he will consider the possibility of introducing an Amendment to meet the point.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The matter alluded to by my right hon. friend is undoubtedly one that will have to be dealt with, but I think I can hardly discuss it by means of Question and answer.

MR. REA (Gloucester): I beg to ask the first Lord of the Treasury whether, in the event of the Education Bill becoming law, the associations of voluntary

† See preceding volume, p. 1260.

schools, established under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1897, will continue to exist; and, if so, will the shares of the aid grant payable under that Act continue to be allotted by them in accordance with Section 1, Sub-section (3), of that Act; and, if Part III of the Education Bill is not adopted in any district, will the aid grant continue to be allotted to the voluntary schools through the associations as at present; and where Part III is adopted and the grant is paid to the education authorities, as provided by Clause 8, Sub-section (3), of the Education Bill, will that grant be paid in accordance with schemes prepared by the governing bodies of the association, as provided by Section 1, Sub-section (4), of the Act of 1897.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the event of the Education Bill becoming law, the associations of voluntary schools as bodies with statutory duties will cease to exist; but if Part III of the Bill be not adopted, the aid grant will continue to be allotted as at present.

Business of the House.

MR. BRYCE: Can the Leader of the House give any indication as to the business for Friday and the probable course of the debate on the Budget?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On Thursday there will be a general discussion on the Budget, and subsequently on the Report stage of the Resolutions. On Friday I propose to take Revenue Votes in Supply, beginning with the Postal Telegraphs Vote, which was not placed first last year.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Will it be possible to discuss the proposed tax on corn on the Resolutions taken on Thursday?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, but I hope this will not be necessary, as a special day is to be set apart for the Report stage, which can be used for that purpose.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: When is that likely to be?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Probably on Monday.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures (during the consideration of the Shop Clubs Bill):—Mr. Burt, Mr. Tennant, and Major Evans-Gordon; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Thomas Bayley, and Mr. Agg-Gardner.

Report to lie upon the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).

(4.0.) Motion made, and Question put, "That this day the proceedings of the Business of Ways and Means have precedence of all other business, including Business of the House (Procedure).—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 227; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 109.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Black, Alexander William
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Brymer, William Ernest
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R(T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J(Manc'r
Finch, George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S(Warwick, S. W.
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Garfit, William
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Hn. J. E(Elgin & Nairn
Gorst, Rt. Hon. St. John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of(L'nd'nd'rry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence(K'nt, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F(Sheffield, Brightside)
Horner, Frederick William
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, William(Carnarv'nshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(Bristol, S)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Markham, Arthur Basil
Maxwell, W. J. H(Dumfriessh.)
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John(Montrose
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gr'h'm(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Herbt. Pike(Darlington)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hon. M. W(Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B(Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, H. C(North'mb. Tynesde
Smith, James Parker(Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R(Northants
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Tennant, Harold John
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Warr, Augustus
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Cl. A. C. E. (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley(York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William(Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Blake, Edward
Burke, E. Haviland-
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Griffith, Ellis J.

Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynm'r (Swansea,
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersfd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 2) BILL.

"To provide pensions for persons over sixty-five years of age." Presented by Mr. Channing, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Broadhurst; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 153.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

LOAN.

1. Motion made, and Question put, "That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, sums not exceeding £32,000,000 may be raised by means of the creation of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Consolidated Stock within the meaning of The National Debt (Conversion) Act, 1888; and that any annuities forming stock so created be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

"That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund." —(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

(4.15.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he was surprised that a Resolution of this kind should be moved in silence, and that not a word of explanation was offered to the Committee.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I fully explained my reasons for proposing this loan last night.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): The right hon. Gentleman was last night asked to give, and was understood to promise, a full explanation, when this Resolution came to be moved, as to the character of the loan, whether it was to be Consols, and, if so, whether it was to be subject to the reduction to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1903.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There could be no doubt on that subject in the mind of anybody who listened to the Resolution which the Chairman read just now. I propose to borrow this £32,000,000 in Consols, and, being so borrowed, they will be subject to precisely the same rules as existing Consols—namely, the reduction to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1903. That, Sir, is really the whole explanation to be given.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the amount of issue would be £32,000,000, or whether it would be for a larger sum, in order to cover the discount at which the loan would require to be issued.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The amount of issue will be £32,000,000.

MR. DILLON reminded the right hon. Gentleman that in his Budget speech he distinctly stated that he proposed to ask the House to authorise the raising of £32,000,000 on terms which he would fully explain.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, I did not say that. I said I would explain the nature of the loan. That is explained in the Resolution.

MR. DILLON said that that was not the impression which the right hon. Gentleman conveyed to the House. When a Minister promised to explain, at a later stage, the nature of a loan, the House naturally expected that he would personally make a statement, and not content himself with having a Resolution read at the Table. From the course of his observations the previous night, he was convinced there was a pretty wide expectation in the Committee that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going, in the course of his explanation, to come to close quarters with the question of the liability of the two colonies for some portion of the debt. He knew that that opinion was widely shared, and that the right hon. Gentleman's explanation was looked forward to with a certain amount of interest in consequence. But now they gathered from what had been said that, as regarded the loan of £32,000,000, there was no prospect whatever of recovering any portion of it from the colonies, and that they were in precisely the same position as they stood in regard to the £60,000,000 loan of last year. That was exactly what he expected. He did not believe, and he never had believed, that one single solitary sixpence of any one of those loans would be recovered from the two colonies. But certainly the Committee was, both last year and yesterday, led to expect that some provision would be made for ear-marking, at all events, a portion of the loan to be charged on the credit of the colonies, and repaid in the future. If that could not be done legally, as he believed it could not at the present time, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought, at any rate, to make some definite statement with regard to the intentions of the Government in connection with these loans.

In his speech of the previous day, the right hon. Gentleman took great credit to himself, when citing the enormous figures of his Budget, for putting the worst rather than the best aspect before the House, and for not prophesying a smooth state of things. He thought the right hon. Gentleman in that respect took a great deal more credit to himself than he was entitled to, because, although his Statement would be a distinct improvement from that point of view as compared with previous Statements, yet even this year the Government had pursued the course which they had pursued from the very beginning of the war, viz., the course of leading on the people of this country from step to step by keeping them in the dark as to the true condition of affairs in South Africa, and the true obligations they were being called upon to face. Last year they were asked to sanction a loan of £60,000,000, and it would be within the recollection of the Committee that the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced, in his Budget speech, that he had to provide for a deficit of £41,000,000. To do so, he asked for a loan of £60,000,000, a course which was absolutely without parallel in Parliamentary history. What was the ground on which he justified that course? He said that he had been frequently accused of underestimating the cost of the war, and that therefore, although, in the Estimates of last year, provision was made to continue the war for as long a period as the Government then believed it would be necessary to continue it, and although they took provision also for the expensive operations of concluding the war, bringing back the troops, and paying pensions and bonuses and other outlays incidental to the disbandment of the Reservists and the Yeomanry, in spite of that, and in view of the charges which had been made against him in the past, he was determined to have an ample margin for contingencies. He fixed that margin at £5,000,000 or £6,000,000, a very generous margin indeed, in view of the fact that the Government were supposed to have made full provision in the Estimates of the year for the war and contingent expenses. The right hon. Gentleman also went on to say that, owing to the peculiar nature of his Budget, and to the fact that so large a share of the income was to be derived from the income tax, which mainly came in in the last quarter of the financial year, he must call on the House of Commons not only to provide that generous margin of £5,000,000 in addition to the Estimates,

but also to give him further borrowing powers to the extent of £10,000,000. He also said that if that total margin of £15,000,000 were not required, it would, by the redemption of Treasury Bills, be restored to the taxpayers. Shortly after the Loan Bill was sanctioned, there was suddenly sprung upon the House, without the slightest hint of warning, a Vote for £6,500,000 as a grant in aid to the new colonies. The Government must have known that that was going to be proposed to the House, yet they kept hon. Members in absolute ignorance of it while they were seeking to obtain their other demands. Later in the autumn, before the House separated for the holidays, the First Lord of the Treasury stated that, after the most careful investigation of the military situation in South Africa, in conjunction with Lord Kitchener, the Home Government had arrived at the conclusion that about the month of September it would be possible to bring home some 70,000 troops. That was an extraordinary instance of the policy of leading the people of this country by a system of deception from point to point, so that they might never have a just and true conception of the liabilities and responsibilities which the war was casting upon them. As soon as Parliament rose, the whole of that beautiful vision vanished and dissolved into thin air, and not only was the whole sum voted for the prosecution of the war, and for the bringing home of the troops, and for allowances for soldiers on disbandment absorbed in running the war, but the margin of £5,000,000 taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was also swallowed up, and in addition only £4,000,000 remained of the £10,000,000 of the loan sanction for which had been obtained, although that money had been expected to remain in hand at the end of the financial year. He ventured to assert that that was not honest finance, and that the couutry was not being treated fairly, or being told what it was really called upon to pay.

With that experience before them, they now had to face another demand from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who asked them to sanction a loan in excess by many millions of the Estimates before the House. He wanted, in fact, a blank cheque to enable him to spend money for a variety of purposes of which the House had not approved. That was a system of finance which was not only without precedent but which was, in his opinion, calculated immeasurably to loosen the bonds of economy and strictness in the great spending Departments of the State, and to encourage extravagance of the wildest character. What was the use of the Chancellor of the Exchequer appealing to the House of Commons to assist him in withstanding the pressure of the spending departments, and to aid him in carrying out a policy of economy, when he himself set the fatal example of loosening all the checks which the experience of generations had devised? The very fact of his asking for enormous borrowing powers for vague and indefinite purposes was an encouragement to the spending departments to increase their demands, because they would have the knowledge that those demands would not be subjected to any close scrutiny in the House. They were told to be cheerful in the face of the demand for a loan of £32,000,000. Why were they to be cheerful? Because the Chancellor of the Exchequer informed them that even those who were most hostile to this country were now obliged to admit that the end of the war was approaching. Of course it was. But it had been approaching from the time the first shot was fired, and it must approach if the war was not to last for ever. He was unshaken in his belief that the war might have been ended two years ago by offering the Boers in the field fair and honourable terms. And if they now profited by the bitter experience of those two years, in the course of which so many lives had been lost, and millions of money spent, and if they were going to meet the Boers in a fair spirit, it was quite possible that the end of the war was really approaching. But to tell the House, in vague and general terms, that the war was coming to an end, and that that fact was admitted by those who were most hostile to this country, was simply to mock the House of Commons.

This demand for a loan of thirty-two millions had come with a shock of surprise upon all classes throughout the country. No one who had watched the

anticipations of the financial proposals of the right hon. Gentleman thought that the loan asked for would exceed £15,000,000 or £20,000,000. All who were outside the secrets of the Treasury were simply astonished and bewildered by the size of the loan. He had in his hand an extract from a letter by Sir Robert Giffen, whose authority on financial matters when he was a Home Ruler was not so widely recognised as it was at the present time. In one of the famous letters he had written to *The Times* in support of the Government policy, he said—

"It may be assumed, I hope, that in the circumstances described in my previous letter in *The Times* of January 7th, grave as the financial position is, there will be no talk of extensive borrowing."

That was Sir Robert's opinion of the financial situation, which he certainly had not minimised, but had rather exaggerated, because he practically admitted in his last letter that the expense of the garrisons in South Africa for many years to come would not be under £20,000,000 sterling. Yet upon such a basis as that he expressed a strong hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not on the present occasion have recourse to borrowing on an extensive scale. In spite of that, however, the House was now asked to sanction a loan of £32,000,000. On what basis was the estimate made which could justify the extent of the loan? The Chancellor of the Exchequer took great credit for his consistent refusal to prophesy smooth things in regard to the war. But what had been the course taken by the Government this year? The Secretary for War produced an estimate for the cost of the war during the coming year of £41,000,000, and he took considerable credit to himself by pointing out how much the cost had been reduced by the exertions of Lord Kitchener. When, in the course of the debate, some of his hon. friends expressed a doubt whether the war could be carried on for the sum asked for, they were informed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary for War had gone into the subject with the utmost minuteness, and were agreed that £41,000,000 would be sufficient for the conduct of the war until the end of the current year. Had the Government intended to deal honestly with the country, they would have told it what they believed would really be sufficient. But, instead of that, they had pursued their old policy of optimism, of suppressing and censoring despatches, and of keeping the country in the dark as to what was going on. Within two months of that estimate they were told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the war had not gone on so prosperously or so rapidly as the country could have wished, and that he was now obliged to add to his deficit between £16,000,000 and £17,000,000 in order to provide for the expenses of the war if it were continued. Was that a proper way in which to treat the House and the country? What had happened in those two months to so completely alter the judgment of the military advisers of the Government in South Africa? From the very beginning of the war Ministers had indulged in optimistic statements, and had been telling them that the war must soon end. Then suddenly new loans were asked, and yet Ministers gave no explanation of their changed attitude. This had been going on ever since the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a light and airy spirit, asked for his first £10,000,000 in order to send British troops to Pretoria. He then told the House it need not be alarmed by the magnitude of the Vote asked for, because they had to deal with rich and prosperous colonies, which he was determined should bear their fair proportion of the cost of the war. Since then they had had to find some £200,000,000 sterling, and they had been told that, even if the war were concluded as the result of the present peace negotiations, a portion of the £32,000,000 now asked for would be needed in order to re-settle that devastated country.

The only sentence in the Budget speech to which he listened with any pleasure or gratification was that portion which spoke of the re-settlement of the country. Never in the history of the House of Commons in modern times had millions been kicked about the floor in such a reckless and indifferent manner, and never had money been voted upon the mere *ipse dixit* of a Minister, without any justification being put forward for the demand. Never before had he heard a responsible Minister use such language in regard to a country in which there had been adopted the insane and wicked policy of reducing it to the state of a howling wilderness. He would be glad to agree to the giving

of any sum of money in reason to restock the farms, always provided that it was not devoted to a policy of confiscation and the planting of settlers on the farms which the Boers formerly held. He thought it was a rather hard thing on the taxpayers of the country that some of the millions which they were now asked to impose upon them were for the purpose of undoing the ravages—the barbarous and purposeless ravages, of the British Generals in South Africa, in pursuit of a policy not only criminal, but, as he believed, illegal according to the custom of civilised nations. There was one other purpose for which this money was said to be required in South Africa, on which he desired to say a word—it was with regard to the support of the South African Constabulary. They might laugh at his fears and anticipations on this point, but he thought in this Constabulary they were inflicting on South Africa a curse. They in Ireland knew what such a Constabulary meant, and if it was kept up permanently, what had happened in Ireland would happen in South Africa, Time would justify his warning that as long as they maintained this Constabulary to keep down the Dutch they would not have a loyal or a peaceful South Africa. They talked now of conciliating their gallant foes, but what did they mean by keeping up at the same time this armed force as a menace to the Boer population? What was the object of it, except to crush and keep down the Dutch? He held that as long as that force was maintained in the two Republics they were maintaining there a poisoned arrow that would prevent for ever the existence of contentment or peace. They were told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Constabulary was to consist of 10,000 men, of whom 6,000 would be charged on the revenues of the two Republics and 4,000 on the loan. For 6,000 men, costing £1,500,000, the charge was to be on the revenues of the two Colonies after the 1st of July next. He believed it was a false hope to hold out to the taxpayers of the country to say that the Transvaal and Orange Free State revenues could bear such a charge. He should like to know how the revenue of these States was made up, of which returns were sent over from time to time. Did it include anything in payment of supplies to the troops, or railway charges for the conveyance of troops or supplies? Until they got full details on this point, the House of Commons would be in the dark, and the country hoodwinked. He wanted to know whether that money was not part of the War Charges which were being voted by the House of Commons. The whole matter with regard to the Constabulary was a gross blunder in policy. Either they really meant to conciliate the Dutch people in South Africa, or they did not. If they had seriously an idea of doing it, even in the remote future, they would not set up an armed Constabulary. Let them keep a garrison, which would be recognised as a temporary measure; but an armed Constabulary would be the symbol of a perpetual, or, at all events, a prolonged servitude.

There was another extraordinary statement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that in addition to the Constabulary and the additional War Charges, he might like, and probably would feel called upon to propose, a considerable sum for our Sugar Colonies. Was not that proposal put in the Estimates of the year?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: When the Estimates were presented, the Conference at Brussels was still going on.

MR. DILLON asked how the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that the House of Commons would sanction the proceedings at the Conference, whose proceedings some of the greatest authorities upon this sugar question regarded as disastrous? But the hon. Member would leave that aside, and ask him how that Conference threw an obligation upon the Government to come to the assistance of the sugar countries. If there was no Conference, would they not be equally in want of aid? Why should the House of Commons be asked to raise a great loan, one of the items of which was an indefinite amount—a grant, the details of which they knew nothing about? Why should they be called upon to incur an obligation absolutely in the dark? For his part, while he sympathised with the suffering people in the sugar colonies, he thought the policy was a monstrous one. What did it lead to? The price had been raised upon the English manufacturers, who had inundated us

with complaints; yet there was a conference which had for its object the further raising of the price on the manufacturer and the poor consumer. He thought they would have a good deal to say about that before this Brussels business was ended.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to go into this matter about the sugar.

MR. DILLON said he quite agreed. It was merely incidental to the fact that part of this loan was to be allocated to an indefinite extent in aiding the sugar colonies. But he was in order in asking what had the signing of the agreement at the Brussels Conference done to render what he said necessary. Was it not rather the other way? If the conference had broken up without an agreement, he might have said that the Colonies were disappointed, had no prospect of assistance, and were therefore entitled to a grant in aid. He was opposed to the whole principle of these grants in aid. However, their action was opposed to one of the chief articles of the conference, and might, in his opinion, lead to the breaking up of the conference altogether. And that was not all the extraordinary finance. The Chancellor said that in pursuance of the policy of last year it was very likely he would be obliged to come here later on and propose a further loan of about £10,000,000. He ventured to prophesy last year that if they got a loan, the greater part of it would be melted in the course of the year. They would have the same thing repeated this year. The fact was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whilst making admirable speeches and congratulating his friend the hon. Member for Oldham upon his advocacy of economy, and standing before the House as a martyr struggling desperately in the same cause, should, if he was sincere, recollect that the best way when he came amongst such people was to keep his hands in his pockets.

The right hon. Gentleman was adopting a policy which was absolutely fatal. He assumed the posture of a martyr struggling desperately against the Departments and his own colleagues in the cause of economy. The only safe way, if he was sincere in that policy, was to keep his pockets empty. There was no use in going among a set of robbers with his pockets bulging with coin. The right hon. Gentleman asked for seventeen or eighteen millions as a margin; and he added that he would resist the importunity of his colleagues. But they would have the overwhelming argument that the right hon. Gentleman had run through the dangerous passages of the House of Commons, that he had the money at his disposal, and had no excuse for refusing it. The policy of asking for loans greatly in excess of anything that could be justified was a continuation of that conduct on the part of the Government which had marked the whole course of the war, namely, their refusal to make a frank statement to the people of the country as to the position in South Africa. It was a policy which, in spite of the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was directly calculated to, and undoubtedly had, demoralised the spending Departments of the State.

*(5.5.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member commenced his speech with a strong denunciation of myself and my colleagues for a policy of concealment with reference to the expenditure on the war. That denunciation referred in the first place to what occurred during the last financial year. At the outset of the last financial year we placed Estimates on the Table of the cost of the war, and which, as was plainly stated by the Secretary of State for War in the Memorandum which he issued, were to provide for the cost that would be necessary in certain contingencies for the maintenance of the field force in South Africa for a certain period, and then for its diminution in the later months of the year. As time went on, it proved that that amount was insufficient, and it was necessary for us, when the Budget time arrived, to state to the House, what I did state a year ago, that more money would be required than had been placed on the Estimates, and that it would be necessary to raise a loan and add to taxation, in order to obtain that sum. At the time I did not know of the large grant in aid that would be required for the Transvaal Colony. I knew certainly that some of it—a considerable sum—would be required for the equipment and maintenance of the Constabulary; but I was not aware that that would be imposed on the revenue

of the Colony, and that, therefore, it would require a civil grant in aid. We stated to the House when the time came precisely what was required, and the House, after full discussion, voted that sum. Now, Sir, the hon. Member complains that that was a policy of concealment, and I thought that he seemed to imply, although he did not state it, that that policy of concealment had also been carried on in the present year. It is impossible for any person who has to be responsible for the finances of the country when engaged in a costly war, the determination of which cannot be foreseen, to judge precisely, before the commencement of the financial year, how much will be required to carry on that war, within the year. I should have thought that even the hon. Member, with all his readiness to interpret, as it seems to me, in the most unfavourable way anything we say or do, might have admitted that. But this year I have adopted another course. I have been, in introducing the Budget, perfectly frank with the House. I have stated that, assuming the war to go on for the whole of the year before us, involving the maintenance of the field force now in South Africa at its present strength, a sum of between £16,000,000 and £17,000,000 would be required towards that purpose in addition to the sum of £40,000,000 already on the Estimates. How am I met by the hon. Member? He says I am asking the Committee to give me a blank cheque, because no Supplementary Estimates have yet been laid on the Table. It is difficult to please the hon Member. I have endeavoured to tell the country fairly what expenditure might, in possible circumstances, which we all hope will not occur, be required. Yet he accuses me of a policy of concealment in the first place, and then of asking the Committee to give me a blank cheque, without stating for what purpose the expenditure is required.

Then the hon. Member falls foul of two comparatively minute items in the additional provision which I informed the Committee last night might be required for the services of the year beyond that which appears in the Estimates—in the first place, a grant of £750,000 for the support of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony Constabulary, and secondly, a grant in aid for the West Indian Colonies. The hon. Member appears to have an extraordinary antipathy to the term Constabulary. He can hardly be aware that a precisely similar force under the name of the Cape Mounted Police has been for years past in existence in Cape Colony; and why it should be wrong to maintain a force in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony under the name of Constabulary, and yet justifiable and right, as I think the hon. Member must admit, to maintain such a force under the name of the Cape Mounted Police in Cape Colony, is a matter I cannot understand. I do not think the hon. Member ought to object to this particular grant, because as far as it goes it will be distinctly in relief of military expenditure, and he is anxious, above all things, to put an end to military expenditure in South Africa. He also objects to any grant in aid to the sugar producing colonies in the West Indies, and he asked me to say why it was wanted, and what it would be. I am unable to say what it will be, or of what precise nature it will be; but as anyone will see who adds up the figures I gave last night, it will be a very small sum indeed out of the £18,500,000, certainly not more than £250,000, and it may be less. The reason it is to be granted is this. Owing to the present low price of sugar, the condition of the sugar-growing industry in some of the Islands at the present time is simply deplorable. It would not be in order for me to go into that subject tonight, but at the proper time my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary will be able to place the circumstances before the Committee, and I do not think the Committee will hesitate to grant any aid, shown to be required in such a manner, after full consideration, as may be proposed to be given by the Government. The reason it has not appeared in the Estimates is this. We had hoped that at the Brussels Conference it might be possible to arrive at an agreement which should commence within a very short period of the agreement being arrived at. For reasons which it is not necessary to enter upon, it was found necessary to postpone the operation of the Convention under which the sugar bounties are to be abolished until the 30th September, 1903; and I have no doubt that at the proper time my right hon. friend will be able to show that the position of the colonies up to the time at which the bounties are to be

abolished would be such that some temporary aid must be granted in order to save some of these Islands from absolute ruin, and the population, possibly, from starvation. That is all I need say on that subject, because I hope the Committee will remember that both in regard to this matter and all the £18,500,000 to which I alluded last night, every item will have to be brought before the House and to be fully explained on the Estimates, and then, of course, there will be an opportunity for anyone to object to them.

The hon. Member referred to a point on which, I think, it would be right that I should say something. He stated that in his opinion it was an absolutely absurd idea ever to expect that the Transvaal would be in a position to pay for its Constabulary.

MR. DILLON: I said it would be absurd ever to expect it to repay any of the money we are borrowing in this country. I thought it was unlikely that it would be able to pay for its Constabulary next year unless out of railway rates and duties.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I will deal with the Constabulary first. The Committee will remember that the financial year of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony commences on the 1st of July. Undoubtedly, a year ago, the financial position of the Transvaal was extremely bad. I think I remember stating to the Committee when I introduced the Budget last year that it was Sir David Barbour's opinion, owing to the condition to which the Transvaal was reduced, that there must be a heavy deficit for two years after the conclusion of the war on the charges for the administration of the country; and as the revenue of the year ending 30th June, 1901, was only £513,000 as against a civil expenditure, exclusive of the Constabulary, of £753,000 it was perfectly clear that there was a great deal of foundation for Sir David Barbour's opinion. Although the war has been going on, yet there has been, considering the circumstances, a remarkable development of the gold-mining industry during the last nine months. The number of stamps at work was reported the other day to be between 1,600 and 1,700. The gold product of the month of March was as much as one-fourth of what it had been before the commencement of the war. For many months after the 1st of July, 1901, owing to the railways being very deficient in rolling stock and being almost entirely taken up by military transport, it was hardly possible for any civil transport to be carried on, so that neither the white population could get back to the goldfields, nor could the supplies be taken to them which would be necessary to maintain them. And, of course, for the same reason the Customs revenue of the Transvaal were comparatively small. But within the last few months all that has been changed. In the Vote to which the hon. Member refers a sum of £1,000,000 was included for the purpose of providing new rolling stock. Well, Sir, there was never a better investment, I will venture to say. That new rolling stock has been gradually arriving, with the result that the amount of civil transport has largely increased, the white population is rapidly returning, Customs are increasing, native labour is rapidly coming in.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Hear, hear!

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Is that a thing to which the hon. Member objects? They come in perfectly willingly. After careful examination my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary and Lord Milner are convinced, and I think on absolutely good grounds, that from July 1st next, assuming that the administration of the railways can be handed over to the civil authorities, so that the amount of military traffic will be comparatively small—that depends, of course, on the peaceful condition of the country—the revenue of the Transvaal next year may be between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000. For the present year, ending with June next, there is no question whatever but that the revenue of the Transvaal will reach £1,200,000; it had reached over £850,000 in March, and, as I have said, it is rapidly increasing.

MR. DILLON asked whether in this revenue were included any duties upon stores and other things consumed by the troops, and also freights.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir. I imagine there is no charge on goods consumed by British troops, and as to freights, the railways are at present, and have been, in the hands of the military authorities, and not only is no freight paid by the military authorities to the colony for military transport, but the military authorities take for military purposes all the profits of the civil transport also. So on that point, at any rate, the hon. Member will be satisfied. Assuming Lord Milner's anticipations are realised, and they are founded, as I believe, on sound bases—but, of course, that depends on the condition of the country and the progress of the war—it seems absolutely certain that the Transvaal will next year not only be able to bear the cost of the Constabulary proposed to be imposed upon it, but also the interest on the debt of the old Government, all the charges of civil administration, and the interest on the debentures and shares of the railways. I do not think the Committee will consider that that is a bad prospect, considering the war is not yet over. The civil administration of the Orange River Colony, apart from the cost of the Constabulary, has never cost us a penny ever since our administration has been established.

Now I come to the reference of the hon. Member to the possibility of the Transvaal's bearing in future a portion of the cost of the war. He stated that it was an absolutely absurd idea that this could ever happen. Sir, the Committee are aware that I have not been disposed to be over-sanguine in this matter. I placed before the Committee last year with perfect frankness, as I think will be admitted, Sir David Barbour's opinion. I then said it was a pessimistic opinion. In my opinion, looking to the development that has already taken place, even under the present circumstances, it was a pessimistic opinion, and having very carefully examined the matter, what I have to say is this—it has always been our intention to charge upon the revenue of the new colonies such a share of the expenses of the war as may fairly be expected to be borne by them without unduly hindering the development of the country and of its principal industry. We consider it premature at the present stage to fix definitely any sum as the maximum of this contribution. But, after the termination of hostilities, we believe it will be practicable to earmark certain sources of revenue, and to apply them from time to time to the service of some portion of the loans raised by us for the war. We anticipate that these specially indicated sources of revenue will be sufficient within a few years of the close of the war, to provide for the annual charge on a capital sum of £30,000,000 in the first instance. Subsequent additions will be made on the prospective increases of these sources of revenue.

Now, it has been suggested that my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary and myself have some difference of opinion upon this matter. Sir, we have a little difference of opinion. I think the Colonial Secretary is more sanguine and more anxious to make this charge upon the Transvaal perhaps even than I am; and yet it can hardly be supposed that, having repeatedly stated to this House that, in my judgment, such portion of the cost of the war as can be reasonably levied on the Transvaal should be levied, I should be backward in doing whatever may be possible. But I have stated to the Committee, what in our judgment, and in Lord Milner's judgment, will be perfectly possible before very long. How soon that time may arrive is a matter, of course, on which I can say nothing today. It has not yet arrived. If it had arrived I might be proposing to the Committee that the loan which I now ask you to sanction should be raised in a different way. But the time for that is not yet come; we must at present borrow on our own credit without reference to the Transvaal. I can only say that I hope the Committee will feel that at any rate the statement I have made does not bear out the lugubrious views of the hon. Member as to the present position of the Transvaal, or as to its future, and that they will be convinced that what we can do shall be done to carry out the policy I have indicated.

*(5.26.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has given us a very pleasant prospect, and I think he should have attempted to fix the time when the British taxpayer is to receive this relief.

* SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is difficult to argue with the right hon. Gentleman, because he has always said the British

taxpayer would never get it. It is a little hard to ask us to fix the time precisely.

* SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: We have the definite promise of the right hon. Gentleman, and perhaps still more definitely the promise of the Colonial Secretary, that we are to have £30,000,000. It would have been agreeable to us to know when it was likely that we were to receive that £30,000,000 from the Transvaal in relief of the loan that has been made, because we have had a very encouraging pledge from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and when the time comes, we hope—no one wishes it more than I do—he will be there to redeem the pledge to produce £30,000,000 from the Transvaal in reduction, say, of the debt which is being raised tonight —that is, £32,000,000. That he undertakes, as far as he can, shall be met by the Transvaal. I should like very much an assurance that that is consistent with the payment of compensation, with the restoration of the ruined condition of the Transvaal, with the repatriation of the Boers who are prisoners, with dealing with the camps, with the settlement which is to turn the Transvaal into a British colony, and with the development of the country, which is to be done at once. That is not the language of those people in the Transvaal who are chiefly concerned. If you ask the gentlemen who are producing this gold, they say, "No; it would be extremely unfair; it would be extremely impolitic to do anything of the kind." They say, "You should not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs." But the bird is not a goose at all. It is a bird of a very different description. It is a bird rather like those described by Burke when he called the Nabobs of India in the old days "birds of passage and birds of prey." That is the bird you have to deal with. There are mines, as we know, which are floated not to be worked but to be sold. The money made out of these mines is not a source of wealth. It has been what is called "milked." Mines have been started and they have been sold, and most of their projectors are no longer in the Transvaal at all. Therefore, the contingent promise of this £30,000,000 depends upon the anticipation that the Transvaal shall have reached its own development by these immense liabilities—liabilities of development, of this plan of settlement, of irrigation, of all these works—and I wish I was as sanguine as the right hon. Gentleman of being able to get within any measurable time £30,000,000 from the Transvaal. I hope it will be so, and nobody will be more delighted than I shall be. If you listen to all the golden dreams which are put forward, you may believe it; but these golden dreams are mere advertisements of prospectuses put forward in order that there may be more flotations of mines. That is the reason for these splendid plans of future prosperity. But when you come to touch them, you find that the people at the bottom of them have no disposition to carry them out. I confess I am not as sanguine as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he ought to know a great deal better than I do. If in his next Budget the right hon. Gentleman is able to produce £30,000,000 ——

* SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I never said that.

* SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Or in the Budget after that—if he is able to produce £30,000,000 for this purpose, I should be extremely gratified. This is a matter of very great importance, and will have to be examined. When we receive, as no doubt we shall, by telegram in the course of the next week, the expression of a fervent desire on the part of the gold industry to close with this estimate of the right hon. Gentleman, then we shall all be happy.

But I rose for the purpose of calling attention to a matter which is of very great consequence, and that is the course which has been followed in the last three years in dealing with this question of taxation and loans—the proportion which the taxation has borne to the loans. We are constantly assured that the country has been enthusiastic in regard to this war, and that it has been willing to make great sacrifices. So it has; it has made sacrifices of life to a terrible degree. But, Sir, there has been no war waged, I believe, in which the Government, I suppose judging the

temper of the people, has ventured to ask such small sacrifices of the generation who have made the war. A great responsibility belongs to the generation that makes a war, and it ought to bear itself a considerable part of the burden, and to be very chary of throwing that burden upon their posterity, who were not responsible for making the war. But what have we done in this case? I asked the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, and he was good enough to say he would procure me the exact figures. I cannot give the amount in cyphers, but the proportion is obvious enough. The right hon. Gentleman stated last year that up to that time all the additional taxation that had been levied was exhausted by the normal expenditure. Consequently, up to last year, the £12,000,000 voted in 1900 contributed nothing at all to the war; therefore, in all that debt which you were raising you paid nothing towards this war, because the whole of the burden falls on posterity. The borrowing at that time, I think, amounted to £62,000,000. That is the figure which stands in the Consolidated Fund Return. The additional taxation was estimated at £12,000,000. I am accurate in that figure, I know, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech last year, in speaking of the termination of the war, said that all the additional taxation of 1900 would be required for the normal expenditure if the war came to an end in three months. Very well. Then there is the money that has been spent or contributed in additional taxation in the year just concluded. That, I suppose, includes the £12,000,000 additional taxation of 1900, and £11,000,000 estimated taxation in 1901. But that does not make more than between £20,000,000 and £25,000,000 of taxation, without speaking of the £5,000,000 you are now going to add. Therefore, unless these figures are entirely wrong, it comes out at something like £30,000,000 of taxation in the three years.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: More than that; it is more like £35,000,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I knew I had not the exact figures. We will say about £35,000,000 including the £5,000,000 of this year.

Sir William Harcourt.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, no.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then I do not see how that is consistent with the statement of last year that all the additional taxation had been absorbed by the normal expenditure.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I cannot trace that statement, though I may be wrong.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am quite sure I am right about that. The right hon. Gentleman said that if the war came to an end there would be no possibility of reducing the additional taxation, because it was all wanted for the normal expenditure.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think I said that.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have not the speech with me tonight, but it is on page 13. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer handed the right hon. Gentleman a copy of his 1901 Budget speech.] Yes, this is the pamphlet I referred to. Here is the passage—

"The question we have to ask ourselves is—How has this increased expenditure been provided? It has been provided simply by the additional taxation imposed last year. What was that additional taxation imposed for? It was not for ordinary expenditure, but for war services. It was proposed and it was intended by this House to be additional taxation for war expenditure, and we all hoped and expected that at the end of the war it could be remitted. But since then our ordinary expenditure, apart from the war, has enormously increased, and looking at the way in which the increase is going on, supposing the war came to an end three or four months hence—[Opposition cries of "Oh, oh!"]—well, supposing it came to an end sooner than hon. Members opposite expect, as it possibly may, our ordinary expenditure would not permit us to remit the additional taxation which was imposed for war purposes last year."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think the right hon. Gentleman is carrying that farther than I intended. I did not say that our ordinary expenditure swallowed up the whole of the additional taxation, but that the additional taxation could not all be remitted.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I confess I find it difficult to extract that

from these words. I had not quite finished the sentence—

"Supposing it came to an end . . . our ordinary expenditure would not permit us to remit the additional taxation which was imposed for war purposes last year, and which, let me remind the Committee, included an income tax of no less than 1s. in the pound. I hope the Committee will feel that I am trying to place before it the financial situation frankly and fearlessly."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: We are discussing this matter under some difficulty in the absence of figures. To the best of my recollection, the revenue contributed to the cost of the war in the year to which I was then alluding was £15,500,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: However, for the purposes of what I desire to say, it does not matter whether it is £30,000,000 or £35,000,000. I think I am right in saying that the right hon. Gentleman stated yesterday that the money raised by loans up to this time had been £119,000,000.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes; it is rather more.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: We are going to raise now £32,000,000. We will call the total £150,000,000. In that case, if the money raised by taxation is between £30,000,000 and £40,000,000, what does it mean? It means that the amount you have raised by taxation for this war, for which you are so enthusiastic, and for which you are ready to make such sacrifices, is about one-fifth of the whole.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is more than that. I gave the figures showing how much of the total expenditure had been raised by loan and how much by taxation up to the end of March last. The amount raised by loans is over £119,600,000, and by taxation a little under £45,500,000.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): Including the suspension of the Sinking Fund and realised surpluses, which amounted to over £18,000,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not accept at all the suspension of the Sinking Funds, as additional taxation for war purposes. It is simply an aggravation of the debt by destroying the Fund which was set apart to discharge it. It is not an addition to, but a discontinuance of, taxation. I think there must be some fundamental error there. I will take what really are the taxes levied for the war. That is the only test I apply. I say that in round numbers the amount is about £30,000,000. What has been the practice in former times when the country was much less rich and populous? It is supposed that we are all enthusiastic and ready to make the greatest sacrifices. I assume that the right hon. Gentleman was willing to impose as much taxation as he thought the country was fit to bear. In his first speech, where he laid down admirable principles of taxation, and pointed out to the country how ready it ought to be to accept the taxes which he then proposed, he referred to the precedents of former times. He referred to the great war waged by Mr. Pitt, and he pointed out how at that time when the population was not half what it is now and when its wealth was incomparably less, the country cheerfully accepted an income-tax of 2s. in the pound, how there was taxation on every conceivable thing, and how there was contributed to the cost of that war £391,000,000 in 13 years. What is the proportion contributed by this great and wealthy country compared with the sacrifices that we made at that time? But let us come down to later times which I remember myself. The Crimean War, which he also quoted as an example of the way in which this country ought to be prepared to act, cost £70,000,000. He stated that the larger proportion of that £70,000,000 was raised by taxation and not by loan. Therefore, half a century ago, when the country was much poorer than it is now, the taxpayer was prepared to pay more than half the cost of a contemporary war. We degenerate people, enthusiastic and patriotic as we are, are asked to contribute one-fifth—if the right hon. Gentleman's figures were taken it might be one quarter—of the expense of the war.

It seems to me that that does not show much financial courage—I will not say on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for I have no doubt he asks

for all he thinks he can get and all he thinks the people will pay. You are going to throw upon posterity, including the Vote we are about to give tonight, £150,000,000. I know there are some people who think that when we appropriate whole sections of a continent we are giving them something which will be to them of enormous pecuniary advantage. That is not so. It may turn out to be a source not of wealth, but of great expenditure. I have seen in this country, myself, great families and great landowners who, not satisfied with their ancient and noble hereditary estates, would not rest until they had acquired the property of everybody around them. They borrowed money at great interest in order to effect those purchases. They mortgaged the old hereditary estate, and when they had effected a great expansion, the family was ruined by that policy. It is possible that that may be done by States as well as by individuals. There may be a limit beyond which enormous acquisitions of territory will not add to your strength. It is said that we are going to send out people to populate these enormous countries—countries three or four times bigger than our own. I am not so extremely anxious to send out from this country the best among our population. I alluded last night to a plan, sketched out by Mr. Rhodes, of settling 2,000 people at a cost of £8,000,000 in the Transvaal. If £8,000,000 of money are to be spent upon settling cultivators upon the soil, I should like to spend it at home. We hear of the exodus of the rural population. Eight millions of money might do something towards keeping the labourer on the land.

In connection with these enterprises for the purpose of expansion, our attention is drawn to other cases. We point with pride to the administration of Egypt by Lord Cromer. [Hear, hear!] Yes, but the conditions of Egypt are very different, and so are the conditions that you have to deal with in India, where we occupy a country, the population of which are accustomed to labour and accustomed to government. There you may do a great deal. But where you go and occupy, as we are occupying in vast regions of Africa, great tracts which have no population except savage people, where the white man cannot labour and the black man will not work, there the notion that investing large sums of money is going to be a profitable investment for posterity is, I think, open to question. I think it is a very serious responsibility that we undertake when we burden posterity To a certain extent this war is one which I do not say could have been avoided; but it has not been avoided; and when this war expenditure is forced upon us I regret that we should not have shown a disposition to make greater sacrifices ourselves before casting so heavy a burden on posterity. I believe that before you place these new territories and these new colonies in a prosperous condition—in that sort of condition and development which a great nation like England ought to expect in the new territories it acquires—you will involve yourselves in far greater future expenditure and greater loans.

The right hon. Gentleman hinted at guaranteed Transvaal loans. When you begin the practice of guaranteeing loans of this description you are entering upon financial obligations of the most perilous character. They are nothing less than land speculations and reclamation schemes, and anybody knows that if there is one thing more ruinous than another it is a reclamation scheme. But this is to be a reclamation of continents. I heard with great admiration and satisfaction the speech of the hon. Member for Oldham last night, to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has paid the tribute which was due to it. He cast his view a little forward, and drew attention to the dangers in which this country may be involved when it enters upon unlimited expenditure and unlimited loans. I confess I regard with some apprehension and with great regret that we should today be completing loans for £150,000,000. I fear that we are not by any means at the end of the loans which will follow when this war is over. I know that there is no manner of use in endeavouring to oppose the loan and I do not oppose it, but I think it right at all events to state the dangers which seem to me to exist. This tale of expenditure, and that which lies behind it, ought to be a warning to us not to be too ambitious to extend the great liabilities which we have already incurred.

Sir William Harcourt.

(6.3.) MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he had for the last seven or eight years agreed almost invariably with the canons laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, but he had made one statement which seemed to him so extraordinary that he could not understand how it could emanate from such an authority. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the necessity of making the present generation bear a fair share of the cost of the war, and joined issue across the table with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the arrangements which were proposed. The Sinking Fund must be suspended the moment the country went to war; but to exclude from the amount paid by the existing generation the sum liberated by that temporary suspension was, with all deference to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, scarcely an accurate representation of what was being done. He himself would have been glad had his right hon. friend raised more by loan and less by taxation. He believed it would be a long time before the sugar and coal taxes and the excellent corn tax were repealed, and he hoped that when the war had ceased they would contribute to the formation of surpluses of income over expenditure, which would resolutely be applied to the extinction of the Debt. He asked the Committee to remember that immense blocks of Debt were liable to be paid off within a shorter time than even the most optimistic could have hoped to see them liquidated. We had £10,000,000 of Exchequer bonds maturing next year; £14,000,000 in 1905; and £30,000,000 of war loan at 2¾ per cent in April 1910. He hoped all these bonds would be paid off at maturity from the contributions to be raised from the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies. If that was done, then, with the taxation which the right hon. Gentleman had imposed, and which he hoped would be maintained, he believed we would be able to resume the Sinking Fund, and to repay our Debt in the rapid and creditable manner which had been going on during the last few years. He was strongly of opinion that we should never, as we did in 1898, relieve taxation at the expense of the Debt, just as at the present moment he was not desirous of relieving the Debt at the expense of taxation.

*(6.11.) MR. McCRAE said the hon. Member who had just sat down was evidently of a trustful disposition. If he expected £60,000,000 to be paid off from the resources of the Transvaal he was very much more sanguine than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman, in replying to the hon. Member for East Mayo, had not given any reasons at all to the House why this loan had taken the form it had taken. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken a wise course in issuing Consols, but the House was entitled to hear the reasons for the form which the loan was to take, and also as to the amount of the loan. No doubt a loan of £32,000,000 nowadays was taken very much as a matter of course, and therefore the Chancellor was somewhat reluctant to make a statement on the question. He thought that both the House and the country had some reason to complain of this Star Chamber method of asking for a loan of £32,000,000. What justification had the Chancellor of the Exchequer for asking this sum? The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech yesterday made merry over those who had prophesied that they should have an Autumn session last year to vote further supplies on account of the war. He was not one of those who thus prophesied. He had occasion to speak in the country, and he pointed out over and over again that the Chancellor had means at his command without coming to the House of Commons for further supplies. But why were those prophecies made by those who made them? They believed, in their simple innocence, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would meet the expenditure on the war from the money that had been voted by the House for the prosecution of the war. The right hon. Gentleman met the expenses of the year by swallowing up all the money that had been voted for terminal charges at the end of the war for transport and gratuities; and in addition to that, he had trenched on the margin of £19,000,000 to such an extent that at the end of the year there was only £4,000,000 left. He asked the House to bear with him while he looked at the present position of expenditure in connection with the war and the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise £32,000,000 by way of loan. In his statement yesterday the right hon. Gentleman gave the total

expenditure on the war up to the end of the last financial year at £165,000,000, and he pointed out that that sum had been met by way of borrowing to the extent of £120,000,000, £45,000,000 being raised by taxation. But of that £45,000,000, only £26,700,000 had been raised by taxation for the war.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: How was the balance raised?

*MR. McCRAE said he was going to tell the right hon. Gentleman. If he might say so, with all respect, the right hon. Gentleman did not seem to be acquainted with the figures in his own Return. In this Return, which was granted on the motion of the hon. Member for Poplar, it was distinctly stated that £18,500,000 was provided, £9,000,000 by the suspension of the Sinking Fund and £9,000,000 or £9,500,000 from realised surpluses.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It was raised by taxation, but I agree that it was not raised by additional taxation.

*MR. McCRAE: It was raised by taxation for the specific purpose of reducing the Debt so far as the Sinking Fund was concerned; and so far as the realised surpluses were concerned, the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that those would have been applied to the reduction of capital expenditure had it not been for the war. It was no argument to say that the whole of the £45,000,000 had been raised by taxation, because they were not reducing the old debt, which would otherwise have been reduced to the amount of £18,500,000. He would go further, the estimate for the present year was £58,500,000 for war purposes. He would drop the £500,000, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that that was applicable to the relief that might be given to he sugar-growing colonies.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I put the amount at £250,000 at the outside.

*MR. McCRAE said he would take the total for war purposes at £58,000,000, which, when added to the £165,000,000 already devoted to war expenditure, gave a total of £223,000,000. He would even deduct from that the £5,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman had said was applicable to China, and therefore they had the actual and the estimated expenditure for the war in South Africa amounting to £218,000,000. If that was so, it meant that they had, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had pointed out, an outstanding debt of £120,000,000, together with the £32,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman was asking powers to borrow, which would make up an outstanding debt for war purposes of £152,000,000. Therefore there was a balance of £66,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to raise by taxation and otherwise. He had already pointed out how £45,000,000 of that amount had been raised. The same principle was to be adopted this year. The Sinking Fund was to be suspended and the surplus of last year applied in reduction.

Taking the taxation that was to be put on this year, including the old taxation, and the additional £5,150,000, and adding them to the £26,700,000, the sum raised by taxation for the war in South Africa amounted to £45,000,000, or at the very outside one fourth of the total expenditure upon the war. He remembered when the right hon. Gentleman came down to the House, and told them at the commencement of hostilities how during the Crimean War this country, with resources not nearly so large as they were today, paid over one half of the cost of that war out of taxation. Therefore, the proportion which the right hon. Gentleman was paying out of taxation was a small proportion, not at all commensurate with the proportion which ought to be put upon those who incurred the expenditure. Then there was another point: Was the estimated expenditure for the current year in South Africa sufficient? He pointed out last year that it was only sufficient because the Chancellor of the Exchequer trenched upon the money that was to pay for the terminal charges at the end of the war. The estimated expenditure last year was £58,230,000.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That included China.

*MR. MCCRAE: But excluded the charge for Interest on War debt, and he thought the House was entitled to know what amount there was in last year's Estimate on account of terminal charges, transport, gratuities, etc. He had calculated it at £25,000,000, and it meant that if this war was not brought to a speedy conclusion, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was allowed to devote the money voted last year for terminal charges to other expenses, he had under-estimated the expenditure to be incurred by £25,000,000 sterling, and that ought to be taken into account in discussing the question before them. That meant that the expenditure this year, instead of being £58,500,000, should have been nearer £80,000,000 sterling. Every year since the war began the Chancellor of the Exchequer had largely under-estimated the expenditure that would be necessary to meet the war charges, and he should not be surprised if, in the present instance, the estimated expenditure would be found to be insufficient. He made bold to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not carrying out the principles which he had himself laid down in connection with this war. Upon making his Budget statement last year the right hon Gentleman said—

"I never will be responsible for the fatal policy of paying the whole cost of the war out of loans without charging a reasonable amount to the taxpayers of the day."

Having regard to the large expenditure which was to be incurred, he thought the right hon. Gentleman was not charging a reasonable proportion to the taxpayers of the day. Why should he be afraid to do so, if this war was so popular as they were told it was? He thought there had been a slackening in the enthusiasm on behalf of the war on the opposite side of the House, and he was afraid that the country was beginning to realise that the policy of the present Government had been one of rashness in entering into hostilities, and of postponement in paying the bills. This Government would be remembered as one which warred in haste, and repented and intended to pay at leisure. What did all this postponement of liabilities lead to? It meant that the right hon. Gentleman was going to leave a legacy to those who came after him, and he would not be there when the bills came to be paid. It meant that the capital liability of the nation was increasing to an enormous amount. They heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the National Debt amounted to £768,000,000 at the close of the last financial year. If the present loan asked for of £32,000,000 was added, then the National Debt of this country would be £800,000,000 sterling. When did the National Debt stand at that figure before? They had to go back to the year 1870, when the National Debt stood at £801,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman had not been discharging his duty to the country by the way in which he had faced this expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman had been studying the speeches of Mr. Gladstone, and he quoted him in his Budget speech yesterday, and in his Budget statement last year. There was, however, one quotation from one of Mr. Gladstone's speeches, which he commended to the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, delivered in 1879, in which Mr. Gladstone said—

"We are not fond of taxation, but we are fond of this—we are fond of financial honesty. We are fond of squaring the account, and no nation in our judgment is financially honest which does not use its best exertions to square the account."

He unhesitatingly stated that the policy of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was not one of "squaring the account."

*(6.30.) MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale) shared the regret that this amount was not to be raised by a Transvaal loan with an Imperial guarantee. The future wealth of the Transvaal was a subject as to which he had acquired information from the cleverest financiers both in England and South Africa, where he had lived for some years. He was convinced that the Transvaal of ten years hence would differ as much from the Transvaal of to-day as did the Transvaal of fourteen years ago. In 1884 the revenue of the country was £200,000; in 1898, including the Free State, the revenue was £5,000,000. These two States, at the close of hostilities, could not entirely pay the interest on a loan of £32,000,000, but when the revenue augmented by leaps and bounds they would be able to

take a considerable part, if not the whole, of the war loan. Whether the revenue would develop so as to realise the golden dream referred to, he could not say; but if they attached importance to the opinions of those best qualified to judge, or gave credence to the speeches of mining leaders, the Transvaal had a magnificent future in store. The most important of its present resources, the motive power of its industrial life, was the gold mining industry. It seemed to him extraordinary that the capabilities of this industry were ignored in this House, for otherwise it would have been impossible for the right hon. Baronet opposite to speak, as he did last session, of the Transvaal as a bankrupt State utterly incapable of contributing one penny to the cost of the war. There were £2,500,000,000 worth of gold in the Witwatersrand alone. This amount was calculated in two periods of thirty-five years each. The output for the first thirty-five years was as much as anything in nature could be assured, as the amount of gold left owing to the equal dissemination of the ore could be reckoned with almost mathematical accuracy.

Then, other industries should be taken into account. There was the coal industry, which would do a great deal to develop the country. In the Transvaal there were 60,000,000,000 tons of a very high quality of coal. The coal between Middleberg and Ermelo was very nearly equal in quality to the best Welsh coal. The industry had been crippled by the most corrupt Government in the world, exportation had been crippled by the scarcity of railroads, and excessive freights of those in existence, but under good and enlightened government we had every reason to believe that the Transvaal would become in the future the great market of the shipping trade of the Southern Hemisphere. He did not wish to weary the House, and therefore would neither discuss the various minerals, especially iron, with which the country abounded, nor the agricultural fertility of the soil, which he could tell them, from his own experience, would, with a sound system, make the Transvaal self-supporting, even when denuded of her minerals. That was the real wealth of South Africa, and during the next decade, what issues might not be expected from such a policy? Mining companies would spring up, markets for agricultural produce be created all over the country, until what was now a wilderness would be converted into a district of prosperous commercial and agricultural life. Was it too much to ask the Government to lay down a policy which should provide, when that day of prosperity had come, not indeed that the British people should profit from it, but that they should be repaid the cost of their outlay on the war? The right hon. Gentleman had not mentioned the sum which the Transvaal was to pay: he had not mentioned any sum.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I carefully abstained from mentioning any sum, for the precise reasons that the hon. Gentleman has just stated.

*MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER expressed his gratification at the course the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to pursue. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman did see that South Africa was a country of such potentialities that he would be able to charge, a very great part, if not the entire sum to her. But if the right hon. Gentleman intended in the near future to state a sum—a sum which it was to be hoped would be a large proportion of the total—if the right hon. Gentlem n wished to see the revenue of the Transvaal accumulate to such a sum that it would not only pay its civil and military expenditure, but would be able to pay interest on and provide a sinking fund for, say, £150,000,000, then a general readjustment of taxation was necessary.

He had no intention of going into details with regard to general taxation of these States, but he wished to say a few words with regard to the taxation of one industry in particular, and about the lenient way in which the Government had been advised to tax it. He referred to the gold industry. The mining magnates never lost an opportunity of shewing this country what advantages could be derived by taxing every other branch of trade, every other form of industry except the mines. But they were extremely modest where the

mines were concerned. No doubt they felt extreme delicacy in flaunting the wealth of their own possessions in the face of an impoverished nation. What did Sir David Barbour propose? He proposed the abolition of nearly all the indirect taxation bearing on the mines. That was a reform in the right direction, as the incidence of taxation should fall on result and not effort, and such a reform would enable lower grade mines to be profitably worked. He wished to especially point out to the House that it was an acknowledged fact that these reforms, calculated on the amount of ore crushed in 1898, would mean a saving to the mines of £4,000,000 a year. That was not disputed; the mine owners admitted that if this reform which Sir David Barbour advocated were carried out, it would be a saving to the mines of £4,000,000, and having benefited the industry to this extent Sir David Barbour advised the Government that the mines would be in a position to bear a tax of 10 per cent. on the profits. In 1898 that would have brought in half a million a year. In other words, Sir David Barbour saved the mines £3,500,000 a year. But if this saving were effected, he could tell the House that the mines could bear a tax of 40 per cent. on the profits. That would, calculating again on 1898, mean £2,000,000 a year. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs; on the contrary, they were fattening the bird. The only danger was that it might die of violent indigestion, because he only asked for half the £4,000,000 saved by Sir David Barbour's advice.

Then there was the cry that capital would be driven away if the mines were taxed, but that was a cry which occurred on the introduction of all new taxation. Capital driven away! Why, was it likely, with every bourse in Europe on the *qui vive* to share in the enormous profits of the industry. But, suppose these timid gentlemen packed up their goods and chattels and went away, what would happen? They would be replaced by capitalists from all parts of the world; for, in his opinion, this war had been a magnificent advertisement for the mines. He did not believe there was a corner of the civilised world, unless it were the House of Commons, where something was not known of the prodigious capabilities of the South African gold fields. He, of course, knew that this 40 per cent. tax, to those who were not versed in the taxation of gold mines, would seem big, but it was not exorbitant or even out of the common. He had already told the House that the neighbouring Government of Rhodesia levied a tax of 50 per cent. on the profits. The Chinese Government had lately concluded their mining regulations, and they had established a 10 per cent. tax on the gross, which amounted to some 30 per cent. on the profits, and moreover, participated to the extent of 25 per cent. in the profits. That had not prevented every nation in Europe from tumbling over one another in the race to obtain concessions.

The contentions of the mining magnates were absurd. They had no intention of leaving the country. What had been their attitude during the war? Whilst the mind, the brain, and heart of the whole country had been rivetted on the battlefield of South Africa, the eye and brain of these gentlemen had been concentrated on its gold fields. During the last three years they had had their agents in every part of the Transvaal, who had bought up at rubbish prices every available claim, which they would doubtless sell at enormous profits on the English market.

One other point. He had heard that after this war had ended the policy of this country was to be one of great leniency and generosity; he personally thought too much sentiment had been expended on the enemy and too little on our fellow subjects, if we were to pursue a policy of leniency and great generosity, then, he said, it was to the Boers, to the rural and the agricultural population, that we should show this leniency. It was to an enemy whose bravery we all admired, and whose generosity we had had reason to appreciate that we should display generosity. Did anybody imagine for a moment that the good feeling we wished to see established between Briton and Boer would be assisted by prodigality on our part to the speculators

and capitalists who had after all been the indirect cause of this war. Why this lavishness? Why this prodigality to the gold owners, when it must be remembered that every penny with which they were relieved came out of the pockets of the British taxpayer? It was all very well to say we were a great nation and we could afford to be lavish, but could we? Were we not looking at a rather over-painted picture of our own greatness? Were we not putting generosity before justice? Should we be prodigal to the mining princes, when at home we were being crippled by taxation? Should we be munificent to South African industry when the trade of the mother country was languishing under the burden of a long continued war, and should we be lavish to millionaires abroad with a Treasury so depleted that we could offer nothing better to our own poor at home than a wretched end in the workhouse?

(6.52.) MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said he agreed with the hon. Member who had just sat down when he said this war had been engineered by the people who were now to be relieved of taxation. He impressed on the Committee the necessity of taking a broad view of this matter. If the Government persisted in their present policy they would have to incur an expenditure of £2,500,000 in maintaining 10,000 police in the Transvaal. In addition to that, they would have to maintain a large standing army. It would be impossible to carry on the administration of the Transvaal, and pay for the policing of the colonies and the maintenance of the standing army. The whole prosperity of South Africa had been built up by the goldfields. In 1886 the revenue of Natal amounted to £816,000; in 1898 the revenue had increased to £2,121,000. In 1887 the revenue of Cape Colony amounted to £3,181,000; in 1889 it was £8,781,000. The white population of Cape Colony was 376,000; that of Natal was 53,000. The population of the Transvaal was difficult to estimate, but good authorities put it at 250,000, and in 1898 the revenue amounted to £3,500,000. Long before the war commenced it was said that the Uitlanders were groaning under the burden of taxation imposed by President Kruger's Government. He would give figures showing the taxes levied on the mines under President Kruger's Government and the amount now levied. The Robinson Gold Mining Company—to take that as an example—was floated with a capital of £2,750,000, of which the vendors received £2,250,000. If we adopted the Chartered Company principle we should be entitled not to one half of the profits, but to one half the vendors' interest on flotation, or 1,125,000 shares, the income from which was £168,750, as the Company paid a dividend of 15 per cent. But the total of the taxes levied by President Kruger's Government, according to the balance sheet of the Company for 1897, was only £1,084. It was true the industry was behind in the matter of dynamite, but that was a small question in comparison with the real issue at stake. According to the authority of the mine owners, an undue burden was being placed on the Transvaal by the levying of this £3,500,000. If in addition to this they had to maintain 10,000 police, where was the money coming from for the standing army? That was the crux of the question. It was a question of policy, and it was idle to talk about levying tribute on the mines until the question was settled. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had acted most wisely in not now fixing any limit to the amount the Transvaal should bear. All Members on that side of the House recognised the firmness and moderation the right hon. Gentleman brought into the debates. They only wished the administration and carrying on of these affairs had been in his instead of other hands. The whole of the future prosperity of the devastated colonies depended on a spirit of moderation being shown in regard to taxation. The imposition of heavy taxation would stop that development in the Transvaal which was essential for the restocking of the country and the bringing about of prosperity, and check the industry which was the very life of South Africa. That land was decimated and laid waste by fire and sword; its only wealth came from the mines. Were the Government going to cripple that one industry by the imposition of taxation at the present time, when the Uitlanders themselves were away, when martial law and unsettled conditions prevailed? When he spoke on this question eighteen months

ago, he did not forsee that the Government would embark on this policy of unconditional surrender, and he thought then the wealth of the Transvaal would pay for the cost of the war, which at that time amounted to £40,000,000 or £50,000,000. That policy meant ruin in South Africa, and until that policy was changed he failed to see any prospect of prosperity. He therefore implored the House not to be led away by the very natural desire to tax millionaires, but to regard the interests of the whole of South Africa as of far more urgent importance than the question of merely getting back a small proportion of the war expenditure. A change of policy would give in a few months far more than would be obtained from the Transvaal if the present policy were persisted in. If the Government agreed to the policy foreshadowed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the policy of making—by being generous to them—friends of the people with whom they had been fighting, they would perhaps be able to recover from the Transvaal the interest on the cost of the war.

There was one question he desired to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the account of the revenue collected from the Transvaal, had any amount been taken credit for in connection with the sale of farms in the Orange River Colony in the Transvaal? Of all the iniquities or wrongs committed, or the barbarous methods adopted by the Government, one of the worst was the selling of the farms of men on commando, or men who had died for their country, and whose wives and children were in the concentration camps. For the sake of a wretched few thousand pounds, these farms had been sold without the widows and orphans even being able to bid for them if they so desired. A large syndicate had actually been formed in the City of London with the object of purchasing these farms.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN intimated that the hon. Member was departing from the subject before the Committee.

MR. MARKHAM said he was asking whether any portion of the money of which the Government were in receipt had been derived from the sale of these farms.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH said he was not aware that anything was included from the source named by him.

MR. MARKHAM submitted that if these farms had been sold during the last twelve months, the Government must be in receipt of the money.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The hon. Member is under an entire misapprehension. As far as my knowledge goes, there may have been one or two farms sold, but very few sales have taken place, and the amount received is absolutely insignificant, and any money that has been received has gone to the military fund, and not to the ordinary revenue of the Transvaal.

MR. MARKHAM said that if this amount had gone for military expenditure he wished to know if he would be in order in discussing it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would not be in order in discussing that subject.

MR. MARKHAM asked if such subjects as the concentration camps could be discussed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would be perfectly in order in going into the general policy, but not into matters of detail.

MR. MARKHAM replied that the Colonial Secretary had stated that the amount received was absolutely insignificant, but if that was so, then all the more shame that his Majesty's Government should have adopted such a policy. He declared broadly that thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres had changed hands in the Transvaal during the course of the last few months, to the great detriment of a noble foe, and that was a policy which he believed the people of this country would not approve or sanction. He believed the Government had acted wisely in not fixing the amount the Transvaal had to pay. The future prosperity of the community in the Transvaal depended on moderate measures, and the Government should take every precaution not to hamper the gold industry of the Transvaal, which was the source from

which Rhodesia and Cape Colony were developed and the source from which South Africa derived its chief revenue.

(7.15.) MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said he agreed with the observation made by the last speaker that it was not wise for His Majesty's Government at this stage to speculate with anything like accuracy as to the finances of the Transvaal. It appeared to him that the first thing they had to consider with regard to the Transvaal and its resources was—Was it able to maintain itself as a community governed from an Imperial centre? He for one ventured to doubt whether in this year, or anything like the near future, they would have a surplus on Transvaal finance upon which they could make any draft for Imperial purposes in the way of repayment of the loan. A great interest had been added to the debate by the speech of the hon. Member for the Eskdale Division of Cumberland. He understood the hon. Member to seriously avow that his view of the future was very hopeful on account of the well-known capacities of the mines, the value of which he appeared to treat with mathematical accuracy. He seemed to suggest that apparently without delay we should take something like 40 per cent. of the profits of the mining industry in those colonies. If that had been the avowed policy of Britain before the war broke out, he thought it extremely doubtful whether there would ever have been a gun fired. But before they talked of taxing the gold industry they must first produce peace in South Africa, and create conditions under which the community might live and thrive. He ventured to think that if it was part of their policy to impose a tax of 40 per cent. upon the profits of the gold mining industry, it would produce a state of unrest which might last for many a year to come.

The object of his rising was to point to certain elementary facts with regard to the National Debt and the relation of the amount of that Debt to military expenditure in the past. He had made the best calculation he could upon the available data with regard to the military expenditure of this country. In the Napoleonic wars this country spent £831,000,000 on military equipment and operations. In the Crimean War we spent £70,000,000. He had endeavoured to ascertain what was to be the amount of expenditure upon the footing that this war closed within a few weeks, and he could not put it at less than £200,000,000. The result was that there had been an expenditure upon these three great wars of no less than £1,100,000,000 sterling. That was a stupendous figure. The question, however, to which the Committee should address itself was—What was the proportion which the present loan bore to the taxation levied upon the current ratepayer? They had a precedent which was of extreme value upon this issue, and that was the Crimean War. That war cost £70,000,000, and £36,000,000 of that total was defrayed by taxation, by the very people who made the war, at the very time when the war was going on. Therefore, during the Crimean War £34,000,000 only was added to the National Debt. In other words, 53 per cent. of the expenditure upon the Crimean War was paid by the current taxpayer of the day, and only 47 per cent. was put upon the National Debt.

What was the situation with which they stood confronted in the financial proposals which had just been made? If they took the moderate estimate of £195,000,000 as the expenditure of this war up to date, no less than £150,000,000 of that total was to be added to the National Debt, and the remainder was to be paid out of taxation. He was making a very large allowance when he put the amount to be paid out of taxation at £45,000,000 sterling. What were the results of this? Whereas in the time of the Crimean War they taxed the people to the extent of 53 per cent. of the total war charges and only put 47 per cent. upon the National Debt, in the present instance only 23 per cent. of the cost of the war was being paid by the taxation of the day, while no less than 77 per cent. was put upon the National Debt of the country. That was how the cost of an avoidable war, which was in itself not only a wicked but a senseless war, was being met. The only thing that would bring this country to its senses was the finance of the war, and his regret was that the present Government were not

administering this war in anything like the proportion which governed the Crimean War. The present Government were simply postponing the payments, and if they had adopted the Crimean precedent and put upon taxation 53 per cent. of the cost, then the people would have risen to inquire whether the time had not gone by when this war ought to have been brought to an honourable conclusion. So far as this war in South Africa was concerned, the National Debt had gone back in consequence to the limit at which it stood some twenty-five or thirty years ago. This war had already undone from twenty-five to thirty years of retrenchment upon the national finances, and this had been largely due to the pusillanimous policy of saddling upon the shoulders of posterity a burden which ought to have been discharged by the present generation. He had protested from the first against the whole scheme of the war, and he urged the Government to face the financial situation more in accordance with precedents.

*(7.30.) COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) contended that the present war ought to be compared with the war in America, and not with the Crimean war. It was absolutely impossible in a great war like this to throw an enormous proportion of its cost on the taxation of the country.

Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 229; Noes 102. (Divison List No. 110.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Boscowen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir Jn. Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elibank, Master of
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brooklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michael (Lon. Univ.
Foster, Phil. S. (Warwick, S. W.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (Londond'y
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Herman-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fred. N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison

Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriessh'e
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, Dav. J. (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Depford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, RtHnA. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, H. C (N'rth'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffi'd
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, RtHn J. Powell-(Bir.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, M.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, W... (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinlock, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Lough, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Ar hur Wellesley
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, J. A. (Glam'gan, Gower
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid).
Woodhouse Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Channing and Mr. Whitley.

STAMP DUTY (BILLS OF EXCHANGE).

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That on and after July 1st, 1902, two pence shall be substituted for one penny as the Stamp Duty on Bills of Exchange payable on demand, or at sight, or on presentation, or within three days after date or sight."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

(7.45.) MR LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he wished to protest against the imposition of this tax. He thought the matter should receive a little more attention from the Chancellor of the Exchequer than it did in the Budget. The stamp duties were not progressive. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had to admit that he had realised £200,000 less last year than he had estimated they would produce. A great many of the stamp duties were levied on trade and commerce, and as trade was not particularly flourishing at the present moment, it was unfortunate that the Chancellor had elected to put on a burden of this kind, which would press heavily on every branch of industry throughout the country. This was a worrying and irritating tax on trade. It was a tax on financial transactions and conveniences which might have no profit attaching to them. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer persisted in the proposal to put a twopenny stamp on cheques, he would be disappointed in the result of the tax, and if he were not, the burden on commerce would be out of all proportion to the advantage gained. He had no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a calculation of the number of cheques used at present, but the great use which was made of cheques had grown up because the tax was 1d. If they made the tax 2d., the whole custom of trade would be altered, and cheques would not be drawn for small amounts as at present. He cited one case of a small Co-operative Society in Ireland. The profits of the concern were not more than £200 or £300, and the Society now paid £90 a year for cheques. If this Resolution was passed, and the Society continued to use cheques. they would in future have to pay £180 a year. Of course the result would be that they would cease to use cheques altogether, and would fall back on coin, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would get nothing, and would deserve to get nothing, because, not being satisfied with the substantial sum he was at present receiving, he proposed to double it, and in that way would lose all. In London and other commercial centres a practice had grown up of practically making the bank the accountant of the firm. Almost everything was paid by cheque, because the cheque book was a kind of check on the accuracy of the other books. At present the Chancellor of the Exchequer got a penny out of every transaction, but did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that cheques would continue to be issued for small sums of 1s., 2s., or 10s., if they were to cost 2d. each? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that this would be a convenience to bankers, but he said respectfully that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to interfere in the matter. It was not his business to save the bankers trouble. The present arrangement was a great commercial convenience, out of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer received a good revenue, and it ought to be left alone. He held in his hand a telegram sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer this day from the President of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, which, he believed, supported the right hon. Gentleman loyally with reference to the war. But that telegram stated that the Belfast Chamber of Commerce very emphatically protested against the proposed additional 1d. stamp on cheques, which would constitute an unequal burden on small traders and retailers, would dislocate existing business methods, and create a great amount of delay and irritation out of all proportion to the yield of the tax. That was a very strong protest indeed, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to pay attention to it. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider representations that would be made to him on the matter. The right hon. Gentleman could not be sure that he was not doing something which would be very worrying and very vexatious to business men. He hoped, therefore, that even if the Chancellor of the Exchequer insisted on having the Resolution passed tonight by a somewhat obedient majority, he

would at least, in the interests of commerce, promise to give an attentive ear to the representations that would be made to him, and that, if he found the burden would be greater and the duty less productive than he expected, he would not press it.

(7.54.) MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead) said he wished to make a few remarks on the proposed additional stamp duty on cheques. He thought, as a business man, that the right hon. Gentleman had made a great mistake, and that when he saw the great amount of bother and trouble that would be given to many small retailers and dealers, he would be well advised to withdraw that part of the Budget. He would recommend to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a very simple way of getting the money without dislocating trade or bringing himself into odium with the country. It was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get the money he required if he would only put a tax of 1d. per pound on share certificates on issue. Let the Committee suppose that a company was formed with a capital of £100,000 in £1 shares. What was to hinder the Chancellor of the Exchequer putting a duty of a 1d. per pound on each share certificate? That would cause no dislocation and no irritation. He called it paltry to put a further 1d. on each cheque. Was he expected to put a postage stamp on each cheque he issued, or get another cheque book or what? It was not real business, and was a paltry way of raising money, and it was well worthy of the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would not abandon his present position, and put a stamp on every certificate issued by a limited company. He was speaking entirely as a business man to a business man. Why should not the right hon. Gentleman put a tax on pig iron warrants? There again he could get the money with the least possible irritation. He spoke merely with a view of getting the Chancellor of the Exchequer into a right business frame of mind, and he was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman only substituted a penny on every share certificate for his present proposal he would get far more money.

Mr. Lough.

*(7.58.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: For the last two hours I have been abused for not attempting to raise more money by taxation for the necessities of the year. Now I make a humble proposal calculated to produce £500,000, and it is denounced by the very Gentlemen who just before complained that enough taxation was not being raised. Every tax which I have proposed in the last three years, except the increased income tax and the duties on beer and spirits, has been denounced by the Gentlemen who abuse me for not raising more by taxation. It is all very well to talk of this proposal as petty; but hon. Gentlemen do not realise what an enormous resource there is in penny taxation. All that hon. Members have said as to the delay and worry that will be caused by the twopenny stamp on cheques, is precisely what was said when the original proposal for a penny stamp was made. Now the revenue from that penny stamp amounts to £800,000 a year. I cannot see why the addition of a penny should cause any additional delay. The duty will not come in force until July 1st; and as to worry, what worry will there be? Whether you pay a penny, or whether you pay twopence, there is no more worry about it. What burden it will impose on givers of small cheques is another point, and is a point that has been enormously exaggerated by the hon. Member for West Islington. He told us that a Co-operative Society in Ireland paid to the Exchequer £90 a year on cheques. According to my calculation, the Society must be doing a large business, and issuing about eighty cheques in a week, and I think the hon. Member must have made a mistake in calculating the dealings of the Society. Where the payments required to be made are very small, why could not people make them by postal orders?

MR. LOUGH: Why should you stop them?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Because I am informed by those who ought to know that I should increase the revenue by £500,000 a year.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): How much at present is raised by the penny on warrants and on cheques?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The whole produce of the penny duty on bills at sight is estimated at £800,000, but, of course, my proposal only applies to nine months of the present year. I can only say that in dealing with these stamp duties, one has to act very often without being able to make much inquiry. I will be perfectly willing to receive from any quarter, any suggestions as to the inconvenience or difficulty that may be caused by the operation of this tax, but I must ask the Committee to vote it tonight. I cannot hold out any hope whatever that I am prepared to abandon the tax, but I will be prepared to consider any representations that may be made to me. (8.5.)

(8.37.) MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taunted the Opposition with having from time to time criticised the Government for not taking enough money out of the taxpayer, and for leaving to posterity great liabilities in regard to loans in connection with the cost of a war for which posterity was in no sense responsible. The right hon. Gentleman then proceeded to criticise the Opposition, because they had denounced the proposal to raise money by an additional penny on cheques and dividend warrants. But the objections were quite consistent. There were many Members of the Opposition quite ready to condemn the Government, not only for the insufficiency of the amount they had raised from the taxpayer, but also for the method they had selected by which to raise even the small amount to be imposed during the current year. Many other methods, such as the imposition of additional burdens on royalty rents and ground values, might have been adopted. Personally, he thought everyone should pay according to his ability, but the ideal of a graduated income tax was somewhat difficult to carry out. Direct taxation certainly had some advantages over indirect taxation. It tended to economy. Persons who paid direct taxes realised how much they were paying for the services of the State, and they consequently exercised a very salutary check upon the Government of the day in regard to expenditure. But there were also one or two inconveniences connected with the system. Direct taxes were more easily evaded, and they encouraged attempts on the part of the public to circumvent the Government. That was one of the greatest objections in connection with the present proposal to impose another penny on cheques. The idea, however, had the merit of novelty. Nobody had expected the Government would make such a proposal, and it was difficult at a few hours notice accurately to say what would be its effect. One hon. Member had alluded to a Co-operative farm upon which an additional charge of £80 a year would be imposed by this tax. He had had placed in his hands a letter from the Secretary of an asylum for the blind, stating that the charge would place on that institution a burden of £40 a year if they sent out the same number of cheques as hitherto. Similarly, the proposal would prejudicially affect many worthy charitable institutions, such as hospitals and so forth, in which an enormous number of commodities were required. There would be a tax upon those bodies in every payment they made month by month or week by week. How did this proposal affect private persons? In future most business people would obtain postal orders for their small amounts which they had been in the habit of sending by cheque.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): And the revenue will profit by it.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE said that when the amount was a small one they would only obtain a half-penny Postal Order, and the result would be that the revenue would lose on the transaction. Many people wrote cheques for small amounts, but if the Government made it worth the while for people to obtain small Postal Orders instead of making out cheques the Government would lose by the transaction. He believed that the result of this change in the stamp duty would be a reduction in the amount yielded instead of an increase. He had served on the Finance Committee of a Corporation for ten years, and on the Finance Committee of the County Council for fourteen years, and he knew something about the way the finances of local bodies were conducted. Upon public bodies nearly every payment was made by cheque. The various

Committees in connection with county and boroughs councils required a large number of commodities, and they had to make a large number of small payments. Upon the two public bodies with which he was connected he should say that about 5,000 cheques per month were used. Therefore the county he referred to paid £250 per annum for cheques at the penny rate, but if they had to pay at the twopenny rate it would cost them an additional £250, and they would naturally devise some expedient for not issuing so many cheques. Take, as another instance, a borough of 40,000 people where a penny rate would produce about £500, and suppose they issued about 5,000 cheques per month. From such a borough the Government would expect to get £500 per annum. Surely a town realising that this stamp duty would mean one penny in the pound on the rates, would do its utmost to avoid drawing so many cheques. By this proposal they got the ludicrous position of the Treasury granting relief to local rates, and the ratepayers contributing to the Imperial funds out of the rates. This proposition would be an inducement to people to pay as much money as possible either in cash or in some other way. It was a very easy thing for the public body to pay in cash. Take for instance the county of Durham. There a large number of commodities were purchased from the city of Newcastle, and it would pay that county to send a clerk to the various trades people to pay their accounts rather than draw 400 or 500 cheques. This proposal would induce public bodies as well as private persons to evade as far as possible this new tax. As a person responsible for the drawing of a large number of cheques he could see his way to reduce the number drawn by 25 per cent., and in the interests of the concerns with which he was identified he would do this. He thought that instead of anything like £500,000 being produced by this additional penny on cheques the Government would find that it would add very little to the total revenue. So far as he was able to judge he considered it would be a vexatious and irritating tax which was not calculated to serve the interests of the country.

Mr. Joseph A. Pease.

*(8.50.) MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow), said that in a charitable institution with which he was connected they were in the habit of drawing every month a large number of cheques, and it was more convenient for them to draw cheques than to obtain postal orders. Their object ought to be to make business easy and not difficult. If a man had to pay a large number of small amounts he could draw cheques with very little trouble and without any waste of time, but if he had to get postal orders a good deal of time would be wasted in the process. He had received from a large number of small traders in his constituency already a large number of protests against this tax, which they stated would cause them much extra expense in their businesses. The small trader had, at the present time, great difficulty in making both ends meet, and this tax would reduce still further his margin of profit. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that if they voted this tax now he would consider later on any proposition which might be made upon the subject. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was determined to adhere to this proposal he would ask him to put the extra penny only upon cheques of £100 or upwards. This would prove a great saving in the case of charitable institutions. There seemed to be only one class of people who were pleased with this tax and they were the bankers. One banker had told him that this was a splendid thing, because he would now have to keep less clerks.

(8.55.) MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he did not think this tax was worth the irritation it would cause, for it was a tax upon the small transactions of traders. A Liverpool salesman had told him that this tax would be a burden upon him of £2 per week, and he stated that he would certainly devise some other method of payment instead of by cheques. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman realised how much this tax would strike at their home trade. He was the chairman of the Blackrock Technical School Committee and it was his duty every month to sign a number of small cheques for the salaries of their officials, and occasionally he had to sign as

many as forty cheques at a time. If this tax was agreed to, it would be the duty of that school to devise some other means of paying those officials instead of using cheques, and the Exchequer would lose by the transaction. At the present time a penny stamp had to be paid upon a receipt of £2 and upwards, and if the payment was made by cheque in the future it would mean that an ordinary business transaction would cost threepence. In small businesses now there was some keen competition that it was very doubtful whether these small transactions could bear this additional expense. In all transactions for over £1 it was very convenient to pay by cheque, because they were able to keep a record, and the cheque itself was a receipt and this simplified business very much. That process would not be possible in transactions where postal orders were remitted. Without considering the question of expense the cheque system was preferable to business men, and he could not quite understand why this proposal had been made in such a hurry. Instead of the right hon. Gentleman trying to rush this question he thought it ought to be postponed. The Chamber of Commerce, the mercantile associations and business men all over the three kingdoms had a right to be consulted before a proposal of this sort was rushed through the House of Commons. He therefore trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the proposal, and postpone the question until the opinion of the country had been ascertained. This was a tax upon home trade. The charge for the transfer of foreign securities was 2s. 6d. per cent., and yet it was proposed to charge 2d. for cheques. The ratio of expense was not equal at all. He held that it ought to be the duty of the House to protect and develop home trade. If no one else divided the House on the question he would certainly do so.

(9.3.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he desired to join in the protest against the proposed additional tax on cheques. It seemed to him a most irritating tax, which would throw a certain amount of grit into the mercantile machinery of the country. There was no doubt that the cheque system had developed enormously on account of the facility it afforded for the making of payments. The irritation which the change would produce would be most objectionable. The penny stamp was a very good one, because it made the cheque a recognised document with a legal stamp on it. It seemed to him that the maximum of inconvenience would be produced for the very small amount of benefit to be obtained. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find, if the tax were persisted in, that he had made a great miscalculation as to the amount it would produce, because the tax would be resented by a great many people in trade, and some other mode of paying accounts than by cheque would be devised. He was sorry to oppose the Budget in any way, but he could not support the present Resolution.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that on this occasion at all events, they had heard a great deal of fault expressed from all quarters of the House in regard to the proposed additional tax on cheques. It was undoubtedly an unpopular and unwise tax, and would not realise anything like the amount anticipated. There seemed to be a strange fatality about Chancellors of the Exchequer, who at some time in their careers seemed impelled to introduce a species of tax which was thoroughly unpopular, and had to be withdrawn. Mr. Lowe made that error when he endeavoured to introduce the match tax, and one of his successors, Mr. Goschen, also made a similar mistake, when he tried to put a tax upon the wheels of certain vehicles. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, after a brilliant career, was proposing a tax that the country would object to, not because they objected to pay the amount of the tax, but because it was irritating in its character, and would probably result in the defeat of the object which the right hon. Gentleman had in view, namely, that of increasing the revenue. It had been said that probably bankers would view this additional impost of a penny upon the cheque with favour. No doubt, because it would cause a less number of entries to go through their books. At the same time it would impose a great amount of harassment upon business men, and would be hurtful.

to those persons who dealt with small sums, and who would feel the irksomeness of the tax. It had become a habit of people, not only the small but the largest business firms and traders, to pay by cheque, because this ensured good accountancy, which was of the first importance. If they wanted to keep their books right and save peculation from petty cash, the sure way was to pay by cheque. Then the transaction was entered in their journals, and everything was testified to in an accurate manner. It used to be the custom to draw a cheque for £20, £30, or £50, and pay out the small amounts in cash. That was no longer the habit in large business houses. They drew cheques for 5s. or 6s. sooner than expose their employees to the risk of temptation. He was afraid the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find that he would be grasping at the shadow and running the risk of losing the substance. He now got for every hundred cheques drawn 8s. 4d. He anticipated that he would get for every hundred 16s. 8d. The hon. Member very much doubted whether if he persisted in that tax he would get the original amount of 8s. 4d. He had occasion this morning to invite opinions from some of those with whom he worked in his business, and they assured him that the proposed tax had induced them to make an investigation into the amount of money that was being paid by cheque, and they were perfectly certain that there would be a great diminution in that direction. The lavishness now exercised in paying by the penny cheque would be brought to an end. The tax could be avoided in many ways. The money order system would be taken advantage of to a very great extent, because they could obtain a 10s. 6d. postal order for a penny. Then, again, customers who wanted to remit money to their wholesale houses, instead of paying the 2d tax as the Chancellor of the Exchequer expected they would do, would be induced by the wholesale merchants to use the numerous branches of banks now existing in every part of the country, and the transaction would be completed through the ordinary banking account in connection with the particular business house concerned. To the commercial classes of this country such a tax would be oppressive. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted more money, let him obtain it in a bold way, let him put another penny on to the income tax. The right hon. Gentleman would be well advised to withdraw this proposal, just as last year he was advised to withdraw the proposed tax on contracts, and thus save the mercantile community from a matter which was more or less trumpery, but which at the same time would be strenuously resisted.

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.) said a suggestion was thrown out by the hon. Member opposite that a limit might be placed on the tax, and that 2d. might be charged on cheques of £100 and upwards. The tax as proposed embodied the maximum of inconvenience and harassment with the minimum of result. The objections to the proposal with regard to small commercial transactions in England would apply with much more force in Ireland, where a system had grown up for settling by cheque small transactions between town and country, in poultry, butter, and eggs. The revenue really got 3d. for each of these transactions when over £2—1d. for the cheque, 1d. for the receipt, and 1d. for postage. He thought this tax would be a most unpopular one, while it would produce very small results, and he hoped there would be some indication given from the Treasury Bench that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would reconsider the matter.

(9.18.) MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said he entirely sympathised with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the difficult task which he had to face, but what he wanted to point out was that the right hon. Gentleman had not succeeded in this tax in finding a new class of persons to bear it. The persons who would pay this £500,000, if the tax was carried, would be the people who were already paying income tax, the death duties, and all those taxes which had been heaped upon their shoulders. This was not a tax which would be paid by the great consumers of the country, and by putting this 1d. on cheques, the right hon. Gentleman was practically putting a 1d. on the income

tax, instead of taxing an entirely new class of persons. He objected to the tax on the ground that it was an unnecessary interference with trade. He excused the right hon. Gentleman for the unintentional blunder that he had made, because he could not be expected to know much of the realms of trade. The right hon. Gentleman had taken the advice of bankers. Such advice with regard to towns might be good enough, but when the right hon. Gentleman came to talk of the customs of trade, of the method in which we paid our accounts and servants, of our dealings in country markets with our farmers, it was an entirely different matter. What happened in Scotland? In olden days men went to the markets of Edinburgh and other places with their pockets full of money, and had, in the course of their dealings, to resort to public houses. Why? Because there alone could change be obtained. What happened now was that men wrote cheques, and all these adjournments to public houses had been done away with. They had been got rid of largely by the facility of the 1d. cheques. Did the right hon. Gentleman know what the Scotsman was? Did he suppose he was going to pay 2d. when 1d. would do? The success of his countrymen had been largely due to the care they took of their pence, and the right hon. Gentleman had no conception of the trouble they would take to evade an impost of this sort. He, himself, since the debate had been in progress, had begun to consider how much he had spent in cheques, and he found that he had spent in 1d. cheques £300 in a very short time. A Scotsman did not spend £50 unless he had previously found out a way of saving it, and he was perfectly certain that the result of such an impost as this would be that men would take the opportunity of looking into the money which they spent in this way, and would discover a way by which they might evade this 2d. duty. He had always observed that when a new tax was imposed, that tax was apt to become permanent. Loans had been spoken about, and the Committee had been told that those loans would be paid by somebody else. That might be so, but whether that was so or not with regard to loans, if this tax was passed it would remain, and he trusted under the circumstances that the right hon. Gentleman would find some other means of attaining the end he had in view.

*(9.27.) MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) thought there was a good deal to be said for the suggestion that this tax should not be imposed upon cheques below a certain limit. A limit of £100 had been suggested, but in his opinion it would be sufficient if the limit was made £20. If that limit was fixed there would be this advantage, that bankers would refuse to issue these 2d. cheques except to customers whose means were undoubted, and as a result business men would at last have a cheque with a certain guarantee, or, at any rate, a cheque with a greater guarantee than there was at the present time. That would certainly be an advantage to those who had large dealings with cheques coming from persons of whom they knew nothing but their signature. Then there was the other point of view, the position of the small professional man who had great difficulty in making both ends meet. The person who had a small banking account had a constant check upon himself, because if he overdrew his account the bank did not treat him in the same way as they would treat a large customer; he would be at once asked to close his account. Again, a great many people now used their banking account as a cash account. They paid in everything and they paid everything by cheque, and relied on their pass-books to see how they were going on. He thought if this tax was passed the right hon. Gentleman would find at once that an endeavour would be made on the part of the public at large to see, he would not say how to evade it, but, to see how they could avoid drawing so many cheques. Another reason why the present system should not be interfered with was that a cheque was *primâ facie* evidence of payment to the person to whom it was drawn. One of the greatest difficulties which traders experienced when they came to the Law Courts was not the validity of their case, but the nature of the evidence required to prove it. It frequently happened that a case to recover £1 10s. involved a cost

of £5 for the evidence necessary to prove the case, but a cheque was *primâ facie* evidence. The temptation to the right hon. Gentleman was apparent. Here was at least £500,000 which it seemed he could easily collect. No doubt he had some figures which justified the assumption that 120,000,000 cheques were drawn annually, and one could easily understand the temptation to put an extra penny stamp upon those cheques. If the argument was sound, one could justify the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in asking for £500,000 in this way, which would be something towards making up his deficit. He, however, thought that the number of cheques he should draw at 2d. a cheque would be much less than the number he drew at 1d. He had always paid by cheques since he had had a banking account, and he now drew perhaps 200 cheques a year, but if this tax passed, instead of drawing a cheque for each amount he would draw a cheque for the whole sum and distribute the cash among his tradesmen afterwards. That, he believed, would be the way this tax would affect everybody who had to pay small sums, and as a result the revenue of the Chancellor of Exchequer would be reduced instead of being increased.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) hoped the Government would reconsider this tax as far as it referred to cheques. So far as it concerned bills at sight and dividend warrants he had no objection to it, but he believed, so far as it concerned cheques, even if the right hon. Gentleman imposed it he would gain nothing by it. His objection to it was two-fold. In the first place it would fall very unequally upon the tax-payer. Certain men drew few cheques in the year. Others, who might be poorer men, drew many more. One man had told him that he drew on the average sixty cheques a day for small sums. A difference would be made to him of over £75 a year. That in itself seemed to show that the tax would be unfairly imposed. In the second place, it would not be an advantage to bankers, but a loss. It would destroy banking facilities, and people would go back to the old custom of keeping money in their houses. He had been told by a banker of his acquaintance that it would entail great loss on the banks, because it would diminish deposits. People would draw cheques once a month or once in two months, and pay their accounts with the money they had drawn. Thus the people would hoard gold, which it was not desirable that they should do. He was of opinion that the tax, if passed, would not only not increase the revenue, but would go a great way towards destroying the banking facilities of the country.

(9.37.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) expressed regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not have been in his place during the whole of this debate. If he had been, he would have found that on this occasion not one defender of the Government could be found. There was not one ewe lamb even from the Inns of Court. Every Member who had spoken upon it had spoken against this tax. He could not conceive how the tax had ever got into the head of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He could only suppose that there must have been some re-consideration of the Budget at the last moment, and something withdrawn which left a deficit of half a million, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put in this tax to fill up the gap. Of course, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought in a new tax of this kind he could not always command expert advice as to the effect of the tax and its merits, but surely on this occasion he must have been in a position to obtain good advice. Sitting near the right hon. Gentleman was the President of the Board of Trade, who, no doubt, was extremely conversant with all these matters, who had both private and official knowledge of them; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not sought the advice of the President of the Board of Trade on this occasion, he had missed an opportunity which he ought to have taken. He entirely agreed with every hon. Member who had spoken as to the extraordinary demerits of this tax. He thought the device was a most unfortunate, inadvisable, irritating, and foolish one. What was the genesis of the cheque? Originally mankind carried out their commercial transactions by a

brutal system of barter. They then evolved a system of currency, and eventually elaborated a system of credit. The cheque was the crown and summit of the modern system of credit. It was that which marked the great difference between the highly civilised and commercialised man and the savage. And it was largely because of the increased reliance upon the system of credit which we knew as "the cheque" that we had such an enormous increase in the commerce of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer really seemed to desire, so far as his tax could do it, to put an end to that system of credit, and to drive us back to the methods of barbarism, to force us to leave our money no longer with the banker, by whom it would be lent to others and left to fructify, but to withdraw it from our bankers and keep it in drawers in our private houses. This tax was mischievous in every way; it would be mischievous in its effect on the banking system; it would diminish the capital available in the country for commercial purposes, and would have every sort of pernicious effect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to think that this extra tax would not make much difference. It would make all the difference in the world. Nobody minded paying a penny; everybody minded paying twopence. It seemed strange, but everybody who knew human nature knew that it was so. Between the penny and the twopence there was a wide chasm fixed, which nothing could bridge, in the imagination of man. It was so. Let the House take the example of the Post Office. The Post Office earned its enormous revenue entirely by virtue of the penny. It was the magic virtue of the penny postage which enabled the Post Office to earn its revenue, and not to only earn its own revenue but to carry on its shoulders the loss of the higher tariffs of the telegraphs and the telephones, all of which it was responsible for, and which were carried on at a loss. Would either the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Postmaster General dare to raise the postage to 2d.?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised, as did everybody else, that in the case of small cheques the extra charge would be enormous, but his argument was that in the case of large cheques it would make no difference at all, and for the transmission of smaller amounts the right hon. Gentleman suggested that the Post Office might be utilised, and instead of sending a cheque a money order might be sent. In the first place, to send an amount not exceeding £1 by means of a money order cost 2d., and between £1 and £3 it cost 3d., and there were other restrictions. You had to put your name and write it carefully, and if there was a mistake the Post Office would not recognise it. If one wanted to "stop" it, then it cost 4d. more. And, last of all, the Post Office took no responsibility. There was no banker or merchant—no man who dealt in cheques or transmission of money—who could cover himself with such a mantle of irresponsibility. To suggest the use of the Post Office was little less than a mockery. As a substitute for a cheque, one would have to send and sign for a money order, which was all time and trouble. What one had to do when one wanted to send money to the other end of the town or the other end of the Kingdom, or to some other Kingdom, was to write a cheque and cross it—and one felt perfectly at ease as to the safety of that cheque. Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer apply this system to the £150,000,000 of the savings of the people which the Post Office had in its charge? Every halfpenny of that could be drawn out without a stamp at all. If we required a stamp for 2d. when we drew out money from the bank, why not apply the system to the Post Office? Why should the Post Office perform its business—and very badly it did it, as a rule—under such circumstances as these? It was not fair to leave that establishment entirely free from the fiscal charges laid upon other banks. As had already been pointed out, this tax in effect amounted to another income tax. Cheques were used as a rule by those who paid income tax; those who did not pay income tax did not as a rule use cheques. If in times to come some more liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer took a halfpenny off this tax, then probably cheques would be used by those who had small incomes and who read the *Daily Mail*. This tax was an addition to the daily expenses of those who used cheques, and practically amounted to an addition

to the income tax. He did not know how many cheques people drew as a rule. He personally drew perhaps 300 cheques in the course of the year, and so there would be no considerable addition to his payments upon these transactions. But it would be putting an additional shackle on trade, and he begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to abandon a proposal which had caused considerable irritation and alarm.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am surprised at the extraordinary importance that appears to be attached to this small additional charge by hon. Members, not on behalf of those who use cheques to a very large extent, but on account of their own personal convenience. The hon. Member for Rugby spoke of drawing 300 cheques a year, and said that this tax would make him consider how he could reduce them. Was the addition of 300 pence an insupportable burden to him? The hon. Member for King's Lynn spoke as if the additional penny would very seriously affect the banking business, and induce people to keep their money in a stocking. He, it appears, draws 300 cheques annually, and will he give up the convenience of the banking system for 25s.? I appeal to the Committee to treat this as a business matter. I have not been able to be present throughout the entire debate, but I have heard a great deal of it, and will make myself acquainted with all the objections urged. I have already promised to look into these objections and any communications I receive. I admit that there is something to be said in favour of differential treatment of cheques for small amounts, and it may be possible to modify my proposal, though I cannot now say anything definite upon that. I hope the Committee will now agree to close this preliminary discussion and take the Resolution.

(9.56.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 186; Noes, 119. (Division List No. 111.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michael (Lon. Univ.
Foster, Phil. S. (Warwick, S. W.
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gordon, Hn J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D. (Wed'bury
Gretton, John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'derry
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir Jn. H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fred. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry

Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th.
Lyttleton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wig'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh)
Mitchell, William
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pemberton, John S. G.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Bartley, George C. T.
Blake, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Houhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Langley, Batty
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, David J. (W'lthamstow
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Kearley and Mr. Holland.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the additional customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

(10.10.) MR. FLYNN said they had hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would announce a reduction of the tobacco duty. To the Irish working man tobacco had become almost a necessity, and he spent upon it a larger proportion of his earnings than the people of the wealthier country of England. Many a hard-working Irishman, peasant or town artisan, would rather go without his breakfast than forfeit his dearly-loved pipe of tobacco. That might be very wrong or foolish, but at any rate he paid the tax. He had been talking to a Member of the House who was a teetotaller, and who did not smoke or take tea, and the only way in which this Budget would touch that hon. Member was by the additional penny which was put upon the income tax. And yet the poor Irish peasant had to pay more upon his tea and tobacco than the hon. Member he alluded to paid upon the income tax. He thought the Committee generally would not have objected to an additional fourpence on the income tax, rather than that an additional burden should have been placed upon the peasantry of Ireland. The case of the poor people of Ireland had often been brought before the House, and he wished to point out to hon. Members that tobacco and tea had become almost a necessity with the Irish people, for those articles had long since ceased to be luxuries. Well-to-do people looked with amazement at the fact that an Irish working man generally spent ninepence or a shilling a week upon his beloved weed. To the Irish peasant woman, who consumed a large amount of tea, and to the Irish workman, who was fond of tobacco, the high duty now being imposed was practically a sumptuary law. He had no association or sympathy whatever with the huge tobacco "combines" which had been formed, but he thought that in this Budget there should have been some assuagement of the burdens upon Irish working men. He hoped that before the Budget was finally adopted they would get some crumb of comfort from the right hon. Gentleman. He pleaded for the Irish working men, and he sincerely trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to see his way to give some little concession.

(10.16.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 272; Noes, 56. (Division List No. 112.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brigg, John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton)
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan

Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michael (Lond. Univ.
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.

Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Gretton, John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray

Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, F'versham

Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire

Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Keswick, William
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Lees

Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred

Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Mitchell, William
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath

Nicholson, William Graham
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Priestley, Arthur
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy

Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J E B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R (Northants
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan Gower
Thompson, F. W. (York, W. R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty

Valentia, Viscount

Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt. Col. A C E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H (Ashton und Lyne
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (Birm
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Blake, Edward
Burke, E. Haviland-
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Hammond, John
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South.
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
White, Patrick (Meath, North
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTY ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

(10.31.) Motion made, and Question put, "That the additional excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections 6 and 7 of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 288; Noes, 56. (Division List No. 113.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarras, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Beach, Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brigg, John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burns, John
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Michael (Lon. Univ.
Foster, Phil. S. (Warwick, S. W.
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (City of Lond.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Hn J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Green, Walford D. (Wedn'sbury
Gretton, John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Mid'x.
Hamilton, Marq. of (Londond'y
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.

Hayne, Rt Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, Jas. (Staffords. N.W.)
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesh.)
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, Dav. J. (Walthamstow
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Priestley, Arthur
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Chas. Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C (North'd. Tyneside.
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thomas, J. A (Glam'gan, Gower
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C E (Taunt'n
Welby, Sir Charles G. E (Notts.)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Rt Hn J. Powell-(Bir.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Blake, Edward
Burke, E. Haviland-
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Hammond, John
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Lough, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and to amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he understood that the Resolution was a formal one, but he was quite certain that the vast majority of the Committee did not understand what it meant. He did not think it desirable that any Resolution, however formal, should be passed without its object being understood by the Committee.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This Resolution is one which, in my own interest, I would be content not to pass. The effect of it is to enable the House to move Amendments to the Finance Bill in relation to matters not in the Budget at all. The Resolution is considered essential to the liberties of the House of Commons.

Question put, and agreed to.

CUSTOMS—TEA.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the customs duty now charged on tea shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903 (that is to say):—
Tea ... ... the pound Sixpence."
—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

(10.53.) MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that tea in Great Britain, on account of the better scale of living of the people, was not a necessary but a luxury, whereas in many parts of Ireland it was an absolute necessary. The reason was perfectly clear. In Ireland the people were reduced to a fare which was practically starvation fare, and was literally only sufficient to keep body and soul together. When a family had only Indian meal, sometimes without milk, a little tea became a necessary as a stimulant to enable them to go back to their work again, and it was cruel that tea, used in such circumstances, should be taxed. The English people were not a nimble-minded people, and it was very difficult for them to understand any conditions of life in which they themselves had not been placed. It was quite impossible for them to know what it was to feel really hungry. Why, the whole lives of many people in Ireland were passed in a chronic state of unsatisfied hunger. He felt very strongly on the matter, because he represented one of the Divisions of Donegal which was largely composed of congested districts, and where the population was very poor, and even at the best of times in want of the actual necessaries of life. He felt that to tax a necessary of life was little short of an act of cruelty. The House of Commons had shown itself wholly insensible to shame in dealing with Irish questions, especially the question of the financial relations. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown by his absence his utter contempt for the Irish people.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Chancellor of the Exchequer asked me particularly, during his brief absence, to take note of what the hon. Member would say, and to report it to him.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he was glad of that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was one of the most conciliatory of the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, and he had always treated the right hon. Gentleman with respect. He felt it his duty as a representative of the people to show to the Committee, and through the Committee to the public, the absolute necessity of enabling congested districts in Ireland to have cheap tea. Evidence was given before the Royal Commission

on the Financial Relations by the person who of all others was best acquainted with the wants and daily lives of the poor people in the congested districts of Donegal. He meant the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, whose character, services, and benevolence had been admitted by the Government who appointed him a member of the Congested Districts Board. Dr. O'Donnell supplied the Commission with a budget of a Donegal peasant's expenditure. He might perhaps tell the Committee that a Catholic Bishop was intimately acquainted with the wants, feelings, and wishes of the very poorest of the people. He was quite unlike an English Bishop. If he himself wanted to know anything of the habits of the people, he would inquire of a Catholic Bishop, whereas, if he wished to know something of the aristocracy, he would ask an English Bishop. The gentleman who was examining Dr. O'Donnell was Sir David Barbour, who gave such a rosy description of the Transvaal gold mines. In his evidence Dr. O'Donnell said that the Irish farmer with a valuation of under £10 was practically a vegetarian from year's end to year's end. He further said that a substantial part of the food of the poorer people in the congested districts consisted of potatoes, and when the supply of potatoes failed, the main article of food was Indian meal, sometimes with a little milk, oftentimes not; and he added that that stirabout had a great deal to do with the large use of tea in the poorer parts of the country.

"When (he continued) a man is pretty hard worked and has for his dinner only potatoes or stirabout, a little tea with some bread is really a necessary of life in order to enable him to go back to his task with anything like spirit. It was not unusual to have tea and bread either as a supplement to the food I have described, or as a substitute for it."

Did the Chancellor of the Exchequer think, as between man and man, that it was fair to tax an absolute necessary of life, such as Dr. O'Donnell had described? Dr. O'Donnell further said that in Donegal duty was chiefly paid on tea and tobacco, and that, except in the towns, the people did not drink at all. The only stimulant the poor people in the congested districts had was tea, and for that they were taxed just like the millionaires and the well-fed working men of England. Could hon. Members by any effort imagine a family of five with a total income of something like £25 a year, and of that, according to Dr. O'Donnell, no less than £5 was spent on tea as an absolute necessity of life. He would quote a very forcible observation by Dr. O'Donnell in his evidence. He was asked if the scarcity of milk had anything to do with the introduction of tea. And he replied—

"Undoubtedly. You see, it is very difficult even for the poor to consume potatoes and water, or stirabout and water, and sometimes tea and bread accompany the meal. They need something like a drink of tea to make them forget their bad meal and put them in humour for work again."

He quite realised that the great difficulty in this matter was that the Irish people were united to the English people, who had consistently robbed them. As long as he had the honour of a seat in the House of Commons he would protest against the persistent, cruel, and heartless robbery of the people of Ireland by English statesmen, and English financiers, although hon. Members would that night record their votes in favour of a tax on an article which had become a necessary of life in many parts of Ireland owing to the poverty of the people, which poverty had been created by the British Government. The Irish Members not only protested against the war for which the tax would be used, but they also protested against the tax itself. There was no doubt that it was morally wrong. The Committee had no right to tax an article of food of the people when the representatives of the people protested against it. The whole system of Government in Ireland, especially in its fiscal relations, was a system of fraud. [HON. MEMBERS: "Divide, divide!"] He was grieved to think that hon. Members were unable to tolerate an Irish Member when he spoke of the grievances of his country. The manner in which the Irish Members were interrupted made it rather difficult for them to address the House, and he doubted whether it was a place where an Irish Gentleman ought to be at all. He would put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it was proper, as between man and man, to put a tax on tea, which was an absolute necessary of life for poor people whose only food was Indian

meal at the best of times. That was against all the laws of political economy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew very well that from the days of Adam Smith downwards every political economist was agreed that no taxation should be levied on anyone until first of all he was able to live. If tea were a necessary of life to the English people, the tax would not be imposed, and he for one would strongly protest against it as an act of fiscal robbery.

(11.10.) MR. FIELD said his hon. friend had opposed the tax on certain grounds, but he would take up another position. As a temperance man he entirely objected to increased taxation on tea. He knew very well that certain hon. Members regarded the financial relations between England and Ireland as being based on the equality of taxation. That was not so, and that fact had been recognised by former Parliaments. If he had read the history of the tea tax correctly, it appeared that up to 1874 it was much greater in England than in Ireland. The fact was that the English people did not even then use tea to the same extent as the Irish people, and the latest statistics showed that the consumption of tea per head in Ireland was half as much again as what it was in England. Therefore, identity of impost meant a much larger taxation on Ireland than on England. If he remembered aright, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced the tax, he gave a kind of a promise that it would be reduced as soon as possible, and he thought the time would come when effect should be given to that promise, although he agreed that it was very difficult to differentiate taxation as between England and Ireland. There were special circumstances, however, connected with the tea tax. Undoubtedly the taxation of an article had a large influence on its consumption, except, perhaps, in the case of spirits. In America, when the taxation of tea was largely increased, the consumption fell; and when the taxation was reduced, the consumption largely increased. That was a natural consequence in almost every country in the world, and, taking that fact into consideration, and also the facts mentioned by his hon. friends, he thought that the tax should be reduced. He took a stand as regarded that particular article, because he believed that tea drinkers, as a rule, were not fond of alcoholic liquors. Sober people were generally thrifty, and people who drank tea and not whisky generally succeeded well. The population of Ireland had been decreasing, while the taxation was increasing, and the increasing taxation was falling not only on a lessening population, but on sections of the community who were not able to bear increased burdens. The emigrants were mainly the bone and sinew of the country. There were left behind the old, the infirm, the lame, the blind, and the pauper. The Imperial taxation of Ireland last year amounted to over £11,000,000 on a diminishing population of 4,500,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was a fair-minded man, who was willing to do what was right and reasonable by the three countries, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would recognise that that tax pressed unduly on Ireland, and that there ought to be some special rebate, or some other means devised, whereby the burden could be reduced, especially having regard to the fact that the article taxed was much more largely consumed in Ireland than in England. He thought the question was one which had a special claim on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he maintained that he had made out a case which demanded the serious consideration of the right hon. Gentleman, and he trusted he would be able to hold out some hope that the tax would be reduced. He thought the Irish Members were entitled to some consideration in the matter, and he would move that the tax be reduced from 6d. to 4d.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'Sixpence,' and insert the word 'Fourpence.'"—(*Mr. Field.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Sixpence' stand part of the proposed Resolution."

*(11.20.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not quite sure whether the hon. Member who has just sat down, and the hon. Member who preceded him, have not in their minds some idea that, by this Resolution, I am increasing the present

tax on tea. That is not the fact. It is simply the continuation of the existing tax for another year.

MR. FIELD said his Amendment was to reduce the tax.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Both hon. Members have very fairly admitted that I can hardly be expected to assent to any reduction of the existing tax, and they also, equally fairly, admitted that any differentiation in this tax as between Great Britain and Ireland is hardly practicable. Therefore, I am afraid, having regard to the great revenue from tea, I must resist the Motion of the hon. Member. But in doing so, I may admit that the hon. Member for South Donegal, who undoubtedly represents a very poor population, has greater reason than many hon. Members to object to the tax on tea. But, of course, there is a poor population in Great Britain as well as in Ireland. The tea tax is a tax that certainly does affect the poor more than the classes who are better off. I quite admit that, but even the poor ought to pay something towards taxation. This is a tax which hon. Members who have spoken appear to think presses very heavily upon them, and more heavily now than before. If any hon. Member will examine the course of the price of tea in the last few years, I do not think he will find that it bears out that idea. No doubt the tax has been increased from 4d. to 6d.; but when that increase was made the enormous crop of tea so brought down the price of the article that I believe practically little of the tax reached the consumer here. The price of tea now, I suppose, is almost lower than it has been in previous years, and therefore the extreme burden which is supposed to have been placed upon the poor as compared with former times is really a matter of the imagination. No doubt this is a tax which presses upon the poor, but I think it is necessary that it should remain at 6d.—at any rate for the present. As for the future, I cannot speak until the situation is such that reduction of taxation appears to be possible. At present, all I have to do is to endeavour to find means of raising money which are not objectionable to Parliament and the people. Reductions I must dismiss, and I fear that that can be my only answer to hon. Members opposite.

(11.27.) MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) protested against the doctrine laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if an article of general consumption on the part of the poor became cheaper by increased production or some other cause he had a right to take the whole of that advantage for the benefit of the revenue and to save the pockets of the rich. The right hon. Gentleman had put forward theories which he ought to be ashamed to propound, because he was really capable of better things. He had been led into these fallacies by his evil associations. His idea seemed to be that unless the poor paid these enormous taxes on tea and similar articles they wou d pay no taxes at all. Agricultural labourers, earning 12s. a week, had to pay 6d. per pound on an article of which, next to bread, they consumed more than of any other taxable article, and the right hon. Gentleman contended that unless they no paid that 6d. they would be making contribution to the welfare of the State. Was not the Chancellor of the Exchequer aware that this class made a contribution which millionaires and the well-to-do classes did not make in any measure whatsoever? It was the class that cultivated the soil of the country and provided the fighting material for the Army and Navy. Such a class ought to be exempted from these extraordinary and severe fines—he could not call them taxes — which were levied for the purpose of carrying on wars and ventures in various parts of the world for the special interest and profit of a particular class. He could not expect a great and mighty Chancellor to remember the speeches of a humble individual like himself, but if the right hon. Gentleman would instruct one of his myrmidons to look up the reports of previous debates he would find that he had always opposed the tea tax.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I remember hearing the same speech from the hon. Gentleman for seven years past.

MR. BROADHURST said the right hon. Gentleman was extremely kind and indulgent in his admission. If, however, he remained Chancellor for the next seven years, and remained as wicked, he would still hear the same speech. There was no reflection in delivering the same speech if the same causes continued to exist. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer remove the cause, and he would not again hear the speech. But, after all, he also had heard the same speech for the same number of years from the right hon. Gentleman himself; in fact, his speeches were becoming intolerably the same. If the Tory Government would make him (the hon. Member) Chancellor of the Exchequer for one year only, he would promise to find something new and original, which the present Chancellor had never attempted to do. He could only say that in delivering the same speech, he had followed a most distinguished example, and he was in no way ashamed of having copied so great a man. But seriously, with regard to this tax, he voted against the 4d., he voted against the 6d., and he should vote against its continuance, because the very poor were the people who most depended upon tea for their daily drink. The rural population, more than any other class, were exposed to the dangers to health arising from impure water. But in every cup of tea they drank, and in every bottle of tea they took with them into the fields, the water had been boiled, and that was a great sanitary security for the health of the people. The Government ought to encourage the taking of such precautions, however small and unimportant they might appear to the rich. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been left alone, if he had not been contaminated by his surroundings or associated with the Party which had formulated the Tory policy of the last three years, he would never have made these proposals. When he first knew the Chancellor of the Exchequer the right hon. Gentleman had spikes in his boots which he used on the down grade of the fair trade movement. The right hon. Gentleman's associations had worn down the sharp points of those spikes, and he was now unable to stop even himself or to arrest his progress on the down grade. It was to be hoped that this matter would be pressed home, and that it would be brought to the notice of the people that in the great work of Empire-building, as some described it—although others called it Empire destroying—the Government were bemeaning themselves by imposing upon the shoulders of the worst-paid class of the community a tax which was larger, heavier, and more unbearable than the income tax levied upon the well-to-do classes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had charged him with having made the same speech every year for seven years. All he had to say was that he would continue to make the same speech every year as long as the Chancellor of the Exchequer continued to offer to this House his sophistries with regard to the justice of this tea duty, and to the necessity of making the labourers pay so much towards the taxation of this country. The labourers had paid their share in blood and misery and life-long suffering which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done nothing to mitigate. On the contrary, he had squandered his income in other directions and left the poor people where he found them. Not only this but he left them worse off in the matter of taxation upon corn and flour and in other respects. And in the face of all this the right hon. Gentleman got up and interrupted a poor private Member by telling him that he had heard the same speech for seven years past. He had voted against this tax every year for the last twenty-two years, and he should vote against it upon that occasion with even more confidence and greater determination than he had done upon any previous occasion.

(11.45.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 228; Noes, 111. (Division List No. 114.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gordon, Hn. J E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt. Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Beaumont, Wentworth C B.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Ure, Alexander
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Field and Mr. Broadhurst.

Resolutions to be reported tomorrow.

Committee to sit again tomorrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VENTILATION.)

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the ventilation of the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Dillon, Dr. Farquharson, Sir Michael Foster, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Penn, and Sir John Tuke.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

CREMATION BILL [LORDS].

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 16th April, 1902.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAY (VESTING) BILL.

Ordered, That The Minutes of Evidence on the Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railway Bill of Session 1899 be referred to the Committee on the Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railway (Vesting) Bill of this Session.—(*Mr. Caldwell*).

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAYS (VESTING) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

Petitions for alterations of Law: From Farnworth (two) and Durham, to lie upon the Table.

FRESHWATER FISH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Kirkintilloch (two); Clydebank; and Dundee (four); to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Reeth; Failsworth; Brigg; Barton-on-Humber; Banbury; Wolsingham; Furness; Barrow; Burslem; Nottingham (two); and Tipton; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Henstridge, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Helensburgh; Burnbank; Falkirk; Renton; Coupar Angus; Peterhead; and Monkton; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petitions for legislation: From Southampton and Bury; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Leominster; Usk; Little Hulton; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petitions against establishment: From Lockerbie and Galashiels; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh*]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (AUDITORS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 18th February; *Sir Thomas Esmonde*]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

LOCAL LOANS FUND.

Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1901; with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 143.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures; Mr. Yoxall (added in respect of the Shop Clubs Bill); and had appointed in substitution, Mr. C. P. Allen.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

(12.15.) MR. EDWARDS (Radnorshire): I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, which has the support of many Unionists in Wales. The Bill has been referred to in some portions of the Welsh Press as though it were a measure to establish Home Rule for Wales. This is a complete misapprehension. Home Rule implies the granting of legislative powers, and there are no such powers in this Bill. It is confined to matters of a purely administrative character. If this is a Home Rule Bill, then the same may be said of the Local Government Act of 1888, for this Bill only seeks in a modest way to extend the powers already granted by that Act.

As is seen from the Memorandum, the Bill has two objects. The first is to transfer to the councils of counties and county boroughs certain functions at present performed by Departments of the Central Government. These functions are of an administrative character, and are specified in the Schedule. I may say that through an oversight the words, "councils of county boroughs," were omitted from Clause 1 of the Bill, and that Clause should be read as if those words were included. A few of these powers are now vested in the Privy Council and the Home Secretary, but the greater part of them belong to the Local Government Board. Some of these powers are very useful, and should by all means be delegated to local authorities. For instance, take the Public Health Act of 1875. Certain sections of that Act included in the Schedule refer to matters connected with sanitation. Now, some may think this is a small matter, but it is really an important matter. Why should it be necessary to apply to the Local Government Board for power to move in such a matter as this? It is a matter in which very often it is important that you should move quickly. But it is well known that owing to the overworked condition of the Local Government Board and other Departments it is impossible to do this. The sections of the Act to which I have referred give the Local Government Board power to order and sanction certain sanitary works. Why not give this power to the County Councils? They know the circumstances of the case, and they have medical officers quite capable of dealing effectively with the matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): How many counties have medical officers?

MR. EDWARDS: I cannot say how many, but take Glamorgan for instance. There you have a most able medical officer of health. He is quite as capable of forming a correct opinion in such matters as any medical officer whom the Local Government may send down. His reports are masterly and are quoted by medical and other journals. Is it not reasonable to employ such a man as this, who has local knowledge of the circumstances of the case in addition to his other qualifications, rather than some stranger whom the Local Government Board may send down to inquire and report?

Closely allied to this subject is the power given to the Local Government Board under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, to require a local authority to deal with premises unfit for human habitation. There is a good deal of disappointment felt at the failure of this Act. It has not done the good that was expected of it. Why is that? May it not be because the machinery for putting the Act into force is too cumbrous and remote; and, further, because there is not sufficient driving power to work the machinery as it should be worked. The Local Government Board has to administer a vast area, and therefore must look with comparative indifference on individual cases. On the other hand, if the County Council were given this work to do, its direct interest in the success of the work would induce it to see that it was well and speedily done. Petitions would come asking for something to be done; the Medical Officer of the County Council would report quickly; the County Council could decide promptly; and thus with little trouble or delay useful work could be done which is now not even begun,

from fear of the tedious delay which is anticipated over it. Then take Section 2 of the Public Health Act, 1885; what a paltry power that is to reserve to the important machinery of the Local Government Board. Why not leave such a matter to the County Council, which knows the circumstances and can deal promptly with it?

The second object of the Bill is to provide machinery for the creation of a Joint Counties Board. It is provided that any five or more Councils of counties or county boroughs may combine to frame a scheme for the establishment of a Joint Counties Board. Exception is taken in some quarters to this provision, but section 81 of the Local Government Act of 1888 conferred the power of combination, only in a lesser degree and in a different manner. There is, therefore, nothing inherently objectionable, in a scheme such as the House has already sanctioned. But it may be asked, why should it be necessary to confer such power by this Bill, when it is already included in the Act of 1888? The answer is simple. We say that the power of combination conferred by the Act of 1888 is inoperative. This is shown by the answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board to my hon. friend the Member for Merthyr on the 6th March last. My hon. friend asked the President of the Local Government Board if he could state to what extent the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire had availed themselves of Section 81 of the Local Government Act, 1888, empowering them to take combined action for any purpose in respect of which they are jointly interested. The reply was that the Board was unable to state to what extent the powers conferred by the section mentioned had been acted upon. They knew of one case of the kind. The power of combination given by the Act of 1888 has practically remained a dead letter, as is shown by this statement. Why is this? To a great extent because it has been found that there are very few subjects included in the Act of 1888 on which County Councils can jointly combine. To some extent because of the lack of simple and effective machinery for carrying out the intentions of *the Act in this respect. It* is a matter of common knowledge that, taking the Act as it stands, combination between the County Councils is not easy. Take the case of the Welsh County Council Association. That was a body formed for the purpose of deliberating about matters of interest to Wales. What became of that body? It was starved to death. The Welsh County Council Association consulted the Local Government Board as to whether they could under the Act of 1888 pay the expenses incidental to the organisation and the meetings of the body. The Local Government Board replied that they could not do so. Therefore the Association, which might have been very helpful to Wales in many ways, had to be abandoned, because there was no power under the Act of 1888 to keep it alive.

We propose that when any five or more councils of counties or county boroughs wish to combine for any administrative purposes common to them all they may make a scheme for setting up what we call a Joint Counties Board to represent them. We have adopted the number five because we think a body composed of the representatives of five or more Councils is likely to have more weight and authority than that composed of a lesser number. Such a body is a fitter object for the transference of important administrative functions, such as the authorising of loans. What a cumbrous process this is at present! A demand is made for a loan to be authorised. After some delay an inquiry is ordered; eventually the inquiry takes place. Then there is the report to be drawn up: that report has to be considered and a decision taken on it: this may mean waiting for months. Then still further inquiries may be needed before the authorisation is granted, and this means more delay; meanwhile the expectant borrowers become anxious and try to stir up the officials of the Board. But the reply of the harassed officials is that the applicants must remember that they are not the only borrowers in the country, and that they must wait patiently and take their turn. Now, surely this is a power which might safely and usefully be delegated to a Joint Counties Board. Such a Board would do its work more on the spot — with greater local knowled which is an important factor, and

far more expedition than is now the case. I am not blaming the officials of the Department—I know that they do their work admirably and that they are always most courteous — but my contention is that they have more to do than they can manage, and therefore it is time we devolved some of these duties on bodies less hard worked. The same remarks apply to other powers which might be entrusted to such a Joint Counties Board as this Bill proposes to set up.

Mention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and, forty Members being found present—

MR. EDWARDS: When a scheme has been made it shall be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament for one month, and if not objected to during that time it shall come into operation as if it were part of this Bill. Here there is a slight variation from the usual practice. At present a scheme can be annulled by the resolution of one House of Parliament. This Bill requires a hostile resolution in both Houses. This is no doubt an innovation, but experience has shown that much hardship may result from the practice hitherto followed. It is deemed unfair to the persons interested in such a scheme as this Bill contemplates that all their efforts to frame the scheme and their desire for further powers of local self-government should be frustrated by opposition in only one of the Houses of Parliament. Sub-section 2 provides the same conditions for conferring such an order as is mentioned for conferring a scheme. If a responsible Minister of the Crown thinks fit to delegate some part of his administrative duties to a Joint Counties Board, it seems to me that every facility should be granted for his doing so. That is another reason why we have departed from the usual practice, and why this Bill requires a hostile Resolution in both Houses to make a scheme null and void.

Experience has shown that some amount of devolution of administrative work is needed. I say we ought to encourage and not to hinder such devolu-*tion* [illegible]ently contemplated as desirable in 1889, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon brought in his Provisional Order Confirming Bill. The object of that Bill was to confer on the County Councils of England and Wales the powers proposed to be conferred by this Bill. The stress of work in our Government Departments has increased enormously since that time until now, and it is no exaggeration to say that the machinery of local government has become jammed. This Bill deals with mere matters of business. When a business concern is over-worked, it is necessary to employ more hands. This Bill suggests the employment of more hands: not in the remote and over-crowded Government offices, but on the spot, where the work is to be done, and where men are only too anxious to do the work; for the essential of good work is knowledge of the circumstances of the case. Our Bill proposes to transfer to the people on the spot work which is now done from a distance. Of course, if this were a measure intended to force on the County Councils powers which they were unwilling to receive, objection might be taken to it no that account. But the essence of a great part of this Bill is that it implie, not only a willingness to delegate official duties by the Department of States but also a readiness to undertake such duties on the part of those to whom they are to be delegated. The tendency of recent legislation has been towards devolution. This is the more remarkable because of the bias created against all devolution by the Home Rule controversy. In spite of that bias, the force of necessity and the teaching of experience have driven the Government more and more to rely on various forms of devolution. When the County Councils were created, they were looked upon in some quarters as a dangerous experiment, especially in Wales. Experience has shown that they have done their work well; and, what is no less important, they have developed and encouraged a spirit of co-operation among other classes which is invaluable, both from a social and a business point of view. The Welsh Intermediate Education Act is an instance of devolution, and a very happy instance. The County Governing Bodies created by that Act have shown an appreciation of the needs of Wales and a determination to satisfy those needs, which have produced

most satisfactory results. The Act may not only be pronounced a success, but it is such a success as to form a model for future applications of the same principle.

But objection is taken to this Bill because it applies only to Wales. Why should Wales alone have this boon? Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a very obvious answer. England in 1887 was offered a great part of what we now seek to obtain for Wales. But England refused to have it. She had reasons of her own, which no doubt satisfied her. But the force of these reasons was not felt in Wales, and Wales would then have welcomed the powers which England refused. It does seem hard that the earnestness of Wales in this matter should suffer from the indifference of England. It is all the more to be regretted when we realise that Wales, alike from its history, its language, and its geographical situation, offers an ideal area ready to our hand, in which we can safely make an experiment of this kind without inflicting any harm on the predominant partner, England. Such an experiment has been successfully made with regard to Sunday closing and intermediate education, and it seems to me both useful and safe to make a further experiment in the way suggested by this Bill. And it is not as if the House were asked to give this power to people more or less indifferent about it. Yesterday a deputation, representing the views of three-fourths of the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire, waited on the President of the Local Government Board and urged the claims of this Bill upon his favourable consideration. The County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire are keen in their desire for these powers; and in view of their past record, that spirit is a guarantee that these powers will be used with an honest intention to promote still further the efficiency of those Councils.

We are not asking for a great deal. Other parts of the United Kingdom have had more given to them than Wales has. Since 1885 Scotland has had a Secretary specially appointed to look after its interests in Parliament. In 1894 the Scotch County Council Association Act was passed. But far more important than these, in 1899 Scotland was given a system of private Bill procedure of its own. That was a far greater change than any we are asking for. That was a great change in the direction of legislation, a subject on which the House is justly jealous of its powers, which are direct. This Bill does not deal with legislation, but with administration, a subject on which the control of the House is more remote and indirect. Under this Bill the legislative supremacy of Parliament remains untouched. Only those questions and subjects which are purely administrative and are strictly confined to Wales are covered by the Bill. There is nothing in it of a constitutional character. It is, I believe, a useful and safe measure, which will be not only a relief to the Central Government but also a boon to our local authorities; and as such, I ask the House to read it a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(12.45.) MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I rise to support the Bill, the Second Reading of which has been so ably moved by my hon. friend that it will not be necessary for me to occupy more than a few minutes. It seems to me that there must be a general agreement with regard to the principle of the Bill, which deals in the first place with the transference of certain administrative powers to the County Councils. Objection was raised yesterday by the President of the Local Government Board, when he so courteously received the deputation which waited upon him, on the score of the expense which would be entailed upon the local authorities. In regard to that, I may, perhaps, be allowed to suggest that if these Councils were entrusted with these administrative powers, and such administration did involve expense, the Local Government Board and other Departments would be relieved of some of the charges which now fall upon them, and the incidence might very easily be adjusted by arrangement between the local authorities and the Central Department. I well remember the debate which took place in this House in the year 1891, initiated on the Motion of my hon. friend the

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Beaumont, Wentworth C B.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Minch, Matthew
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Ure, Alexander
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Field and Mr. Broadhurst.

Resolutions to be reported tomorrow.

Committee to sit again tomorrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VENTILATION.)

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the ventilation of the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Dillon, Dr. Farquharson, Sir Michael Foster, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Penn, and Sir John Tuke.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

CREMATION BILL [LORDS].

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 16th April, 1902.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAY (VESTING) BILL.

Ordered, That The Minutes of Evidence on the Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railway Bill of Session 1899 be referred to the Committee on the Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railway (Vesting) Bill of this Session.—(*Mr. Caldwell*).

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAYS (VESTING) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

Petitions for alterations of Law: From Farnworth (two) and Durham, to lie upon the Table.

FRESHWATER FISH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Kirkintilloch (two); Clydebank; and Dundee (four); to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Reeth; Failsworth; Brigg; Barton-on-Humber; Banbury; Wolsingham; Furness; Barrow; Burslem; Nottingham (two); and Tipton; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Henstridge, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Helensburgh; Burnbank; Falkirk; Renton; Coupar Angus; Peterhead; and Monkton; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petitions for legislation: From Southampton and Bury; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Leominster; Usk; Little Hulton; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petitions against establishment: From Lockerbie and Galashiels; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh*]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (AUDITORS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 18th February; *Sir Thomas Esmonde*]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

LOCAL LOANS FUND.

Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1901; with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 143.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures; Mr. Yoxall (added in respect of the Shop Clubs Bill); and had appointed in substitution, Mr. C. P. Allen.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

(12.15.) MR. EDWARDS (Radnorshire): I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, which has the support of many Unionists in Wales. The Bill has been referred to in some portions of the Welsh Press as though it were a measure to establish Home Rule for Wales. This is a complete misapprehension. Home Rule implies the granting of legislative powers, and there are no such powers in this Bill. It is confined to matters of a purely administrative character. If this is a Home Rule Bill, then the same may be said of the Local Government Act of 1888, for this Bill only seeks in a modest way to extend the powers already granted by that Act.

As is seen from the Memorandum, the Bill has two objects. The first is to transfer to the councils of counties and county boroughs certain functions at present performed by Departments of the Central Government. These functions are of an administrative character, and are specified in the Schedule. I may say that through an oversight the words, "councils of county boroughs," were omitted from Clause 1 of the Bill, and that Clause should be read as if those words were included. A few of these powers are now vested in the Privy Council and the Home Secretary, but the greater part of them belong to the Local Government Board. Some of these powers are very useful, and should by all means be delegated to local authorities. For instance, take the Public Health Act of 1875. Certain sections of that Act included in the Schedule refer to matters connected with sanitation. Now, some may think this is a small matter, but it is really an important matter. Why should it be necessary to apply to the Local Government Board for power to move in such a matter as this? It is a matter in which very often it is important that you should move quickly. But it is well known that owing to the overworked condition of the Local Government Board and other Departments it is impossible to do this. The sections of the Act to which I have referred give the Local Government Board power to order and sanction certain sanitary works. Why not give this power to the County Councils? They know the circumstances of the case, and they have medical officers quite capable of dealing effectively with the matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): How many counties have medical officers?

MR. EDWARDS: I cannot say how many, but take Glamorgan for instance. There you have a most able medical officer of health. He is quite as capable of forming a correct opinion in such matters as any medical officer whom the Local Government may send down. His reports are masterly and are quoted by medical and other journals. Is it not reasonable to employ such a man as this, who has local knowledge of the circumstances of the case in addition to his other qualifications, rather than some stranger whom the Local Government Board may send down to inquire and report?

Closely allied to this subject is the power given to the Local Government Board under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, to require a local authority to deal with premises unfit for human habitation. There is a good deal of disappointment felt at the failure of this Act. It has not done the good that was expected of it. Why is that? May it not be because the machinery for putting the Act into force is too cumbrous and remote; and, further, because there is not sufficient driving power to work the machinery as it should be worked. The Local Government Board has to administer a vast area, and therefore must look with comparative indifference on individual cases. On the other hand, if the County Council were given this work to do, its direct interest in the success of the work would induce it to see that it was well and speedily done. Petitions would come asking for something to be done; the Medical Officer of the County Council would report quickly; the County Council could decide promptly; and thus with little trouble or delay useful work could be done which is now not even begun,

from fear of the tedious delay which is anticipated over it. Then take Section 2 of the Public Health Act, 1885; what a paltry power that is to reserve to the important machinery of the Local Government Board. Why not leave such a matter to the County Council, which knows the circumstances and can deal promptly with it?

The second object of the Bill is to provide machinery for the creation of a Joint Counties Board. It is provided that any five or more Councils of counties or county boroughs may combine to frame a scheme for the establishment of a Joint Counties Board. Exception is taken in some quarters to this provision, but section 81 of the Local Government Act of 1888 conferred the power of combination, only in a lesser degree and in a different manner. There is, therefore, nothing inherently objectionable, in a scheme such as the House has already sanctioned. But it may be asked, why should it be necessary to confer such power by this Bill, when it is already included in the Act of 1888? The answer is simple. We say that the power of combination conferred by the Act of 1888 is inoperative. This is shown by the answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board to my hon. friend the Member for Merthyr on the 6th March last. My hon. friend asked the President of the Local Government Board if he could state to what extent the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire had availed themselves of Section 81 of the Local Government Act, 1888, empowering them to take combined action for any purpose in respect of which they are jointly interested. The reply was that the Board was unable to state to what extent the powers conferred by the section mentioned had been acted upon. They knew of one case of the kind. The power of combination given by the Act of 1888 has practically remained a dead letter, as is shown by this statement. Why is this? To a great extent because it has been found that there are very few subjects included in the Act of 1888 on which County Councils can jointly combine. To some extent because of the lack of simple and effective machinery for carrying out the intentions of the Act in this respect. It is a matter of common knowledge that, taking the Act as it stands, combination between the County Councils is not easy. Take the case of the Welsh County Council Association. That was a body formed for the purpose of deliberating about matters of interest to Wales. What became of that body? It was starved to death. The Welsh County Council Association consulted the Local Government Board as to whether they could under the Act of 1888 pay the expenses incidental to the organisation and the meetings of the body. The Local Government Board replied that they could not do so. Therefore the Association, which might have been very helpful to Wales in many ways, had to be abandoned, because there was no power under the Act of 1888 to keep it alive.

We propose that when any five or more councils of counties or county boroughs wish to combine for any administrative purposes common to them all they may make a scheme for setting up what we call a Joint Counties Board to represent them. We have adopted the number five because we think a body composed of the representatives of five or more Councils is likely to have more weight and authority than that composed of a lesser number. Such a body is a fitter object for the transference of important administrative functions, such as the authorising of loans. What a cumbrous process this is at present! A demand is made for a loan to be authorised. After some delay an inquiry is ordered; eventually the inquiry takes place. Then there is the report to be drawn up: that report has to be considered and a decision taken on it: this may mean waiting for months. Then still further inquiries may be needed before the authorisation is granted, and this means more delay; meanwhile the expectant borrowers become anxious and try to stir up the officials of the Board. But the reply of the harassed officials is that the applicants must remember that they are not the only borrowers in the country, and that they must wait patiently and take their turn. Now, surely this is a power which might safely and usefully be delegated to a Joint Counties Board. Such a Board would do its work more on the spot — with greater local knowledge, which is an important factor, and with

far more expedition than is now the case. I am not blaming the officials of the Department—I know that they do their work admirably and that they are always most courteous — but my contention is that they have more to do than they can manage, and therefore it is time we devolved some of these duties on bodies less hard worked. The same remarks apply to other powers which might be entrusted to such a Joint Counties Board as this Bill proposes to set up.

Mention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and, forty Members being found present—

MR. EDWARDS: When a scheme has been made it shall be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament for one month, and if not objected to during that time it shall come into operation as if it were part of this Bill. Here there is a slight variation from the usual practice. At present a scheme can be annulled by the resolution of one House of Parliament. This Bill requires a hostile resolution in both Houses. This is no doubt an innovation, but experience has shown that much hardship may result from the practice hitherto followed. It is deemed unfair to the persons interested in such a scheme as this Bill contemplates that all their efforts to frame the scheme and their desire for further powers of local self-government should be frustrated by opposition in only one of the Houses of Parliament. Sub-section 2 provides the same conditions for conferring such an order as is mentioned for conferring a scheme. If a responsible Minister of the Crown thinks fit to delegate some part of his administrative duties to a Joint Counties Board, it seems to me that every facility should be granted for his doing so. That is another reason why we have departed from the usual practice, and why this Bill requires a hostile Resolution in both Houses to make a scheme null and void.

Experience has shown that some amount of devolution of administrative work is needed. I say we ought to encourage and not to hinder such devolution. It was evidently contemplated as desirable in 1889, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon brought in his Provisional Order Confirming Bill. The object of that Bill was to confer on the County Councils of England and Wales the powers proposed to be conferred by this Bill. The stress of work in our Government Departments has increased enormously since that time until now, and it is no exaggeration to say that the machinery of local government has become jammed. This Bill deals with mere matters of business. When a business concern is over-worked, it is necessary to employ more hands. This Bill suggests the employment of more hands: not in the remote and over-crowded Government offices, but on the spot, where the work is to be done, and where men are only too anxious to do the work; for the essential of good work is knowledge of the circumstances of the case. Our Bill proposes to transfer to the people on the spot work which is now done from a distance. Of course, if this were a measure intended to force on the County Councils powers which they were unwilling to receive, objection might be taken to it no that account. But the essence of a great part of this Bill is that it implie, not only a willingness to delegate official duties by the Department of States but also a readiness to undertake such duties on the part of those to whom they are to be delegated. The tendency of recent legislation has been towards devolution. This is the more remarkable because of the bias created against all devolution by the Home Rule controversy. In spite of that bias, the force of necessity and the teaching of experience have driven the Government more and more to rely on various forms of devolution. When the County Councils were created, they were looked upon in some quarters as a dangerous experiment, especially in Wales. Experience has shown that they have done their work well; and, what is no less important, they have developed and encouraged a spirit of co-operation among other classes which is invaluable, both from a social and a business point of view. The Welsh Intermediate Education Act is an instance of devolution, and a very happy instance. The County Governing Bodies created by that Act have shown an appreciation of the needs of Wales and a determination to satisfy those needs, which have produced

most satisfactory results. The Act may not only be pronounced a success, but it is such a success as to form a model for future applications of the same principle.

But objection is taken to this Bill because it applies only to Wales. Why should Wales alone have this boon? Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a very obvious answer. England in 1887 was offered a great part of what we now seek to obtain for Wales. But England refused to have it. She had reasons of her own, which no doubt satisfied her. But the force of these reasons was not felt in Wales, and Wales would then have welcomed the powers which England refused. It does seem hard that the earnestness of Wales in this matter should suffer from the indifference of England. It is all the more to be regretted when we realise that Wales, alike from its history, its language, and its geographical situation, offers an ideal area ready to our hand, in which we can safely make an experiment of this kind without inflicting any harm on the predominant partner, England. Such an experiment has been successfully made with regard to Sunday closing and intermediate education, and it seems to me both useful and safe to make a further experiment in the way suggested by this Bill. And it is not as if the House were asked to give this power to people more or less indifferent about it. Yesterday a deputation, representing the views of three-fourths of the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire, waited on the President of the Local Government Board and urged the claims of this Bill upon his favourable consideration. The County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire are keen in their desire for these powers; and in view of their past record, that spirit is a guarantee that these powers will be used with an honest intention to promote still further the efficiency of those Councils.

We are not asking for a great deal. Other parts of the United Kingdom have had more given to them than Wales has. Since 1885 Scotland has had a Secretary specially appointed to look after its interests in Parliament. In 1894 the Scotch County Council Association Act was passed. But far more important than these, in 1899 Scotland was given a system of private Bill procedure of its own. That was a far greater change than any we are asking for. That was a great change in the direction of legislation, a subject on which the House is justly jealous of its powers, which are direct. This Bill does not deal with legislation, but with administration, a subject on which the control of the House is more remote and indirect. Under this Bill the legislative supremacy of Parliament remains untouched. Only those questions and subjects which are purely administrative and are strictly confined to Wales are covered by the Bill. There is nothing in it of a constitutional character. It is, I believe, a useful and safe measure, which will be not only a relief to the Central Government but also a boon to our local authorities; and as such, I ask the House to read it a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(12.45.) MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I rise to support the Bill, the Second Reading of which has been so ably moved by my hon. friend that it will not be necessary for me to occupy more than a few minutes. It seems to me that there must be a general agreement with regard to the principle of the Bill, which deals in the first place with the transference of certain administrative powers to the County Councils. Objection was raised yesterday by the President of the Local Government Board, when he so courteously received the deputation which waited upon him, on the score of the expense which would be entailed upon the local authorities. In regard to that, I may, perhaps, be allowed to suggest that if these Councils were entrusted with these administrative powers, and such administration did involve expense, the Local Government Board and other Departments would be relieved of some of the charges which now fall upon them, and the incidence might very easily be adjusted by arrangement between the local authorities and the Central Department. I well remember the debate which took place in this House in the year 1891, initiated on the Motion of my hon. friend the

Member for Glamorgan, with regard to the financial relations between Wales and the United Kingdom. I am not going into that question now, but it may be of interest to remark that on that occasion a very good case was made out for the claim of Wales for a diminution of the share of the principality in Imperial taxation. The question of expense is one which ought to engage the attention of the House. There is no doubt it is urgently necessary that some step should be taken in the direction of Clause 1 of the Bill. It would be good for the Department itself; it would be an admirable thing for the local authorities and we believe also that it would be good for the Imperial Parliament.

Let me say one or two words with regard to the history of this question. The question of the devolution of certain administrative powers from the Central Department to local authorities is not one of recent date or origin. For many years it has occupied the mind of the country—not merely in one portion, but in all parts. Some years ago this question was very much agitated in Scotland, and hon. Members opposite will, no doubt, remember a series of very able articles written for the *Scotsman* in 1886 or 1887, which seemed to show that, at all events, Scotland had made up its mind on the desirability of such a change even at that time. During the last fifteen years almost all responsible statesman have expressed themselves very clearly on this subject. I need quote but one case—that of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, who in 1889 said he believed it was in the interest of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland that local government shoud be conceded in the amplest sense; that not only county but municipal institutions should be completed and perfected, and, going beyond that, there might well be created greater authorities with a wider scope and fuller powers. That was a rather remarkable declaration on this subject by one who now exercises a dominant influence in the public life of this country. He has said that "what he has said he has said," and it would be interesting today to hear him on this question—small, perhaps, in regard to its actual scope, but very important in principle—and to be told whether the right hon. Gentleman still adheres to the opinion he expressed in 1889. As my hon. friend has pointed out there is nothing in this Bill touching the question of the devolution of legislative powers; it is concerned only with administrative matters. It may be said that if that is so the question of the congestion of business in the House of Commons has no direct relevance to the principle involved in the measure, but I contend that there is a direct connection between the congested state of public business in this House, and the power of criticising, as we ought to criticise, the policy pursued by the various central Departments. There can be no doubt as to the present state of matters in Parliament. During the last twenty years great changes have taken place in the social structures of this country, far and wide-reaching in their effects, and the burden of legislation has become most oppressive and pressing upon those who are responsible for the conduct of business in the central Departments. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division had been present I am sure he would have been willing to re-echo the words he uttered in this House when he held that office, with respect to the great congestion of business in his Department. Would it not be well to sanction the principle involved in this Bill, in the interest of the efficient conduct of public business by the Departments, and of the relief to the work of this House? Would it not, I ask, be wise on these grounds to delegate certain well-defined administrative powers to those local authorities in Wales who desire to exercise them?

There are one or two special grounds upon which this request is especially based. In the first place it must be remembered that the spirit of Welsh nationality is not declining; it is, in fact, a growing force in Wales. In the second place we have already had separate treatment in regard to legislation with reference to Sunday Closing and Education. There is this further fact which seems to me to be important when you come to consider whether the local authorities in Wales are fitted to discharge the duties with which this Bill proposes to entrust them, viz., the fact that the great majority of the people of Wales have been trained for local government in a school, and by duties imposed upon them by their church life which is instinct with the

democratic principle. Anybody who knows anything of the inner life of Wales must know that by a long period of training in local government with regard to the higher interests of life they have been brought under conditions which render them specially qualified to discharge the duties of administering local government. The experience of County Council work in Wales, and the way in which the Welsh people have built up and carried on their educational system, go to prove that there is a special fitness in this demand of the local authorities. If it be right to entrust the local authorities with the supreme duty of educating the children of the country, is it not reasonable to assume that they are able and fitted to discharge the administrative functions mentioned in this Bill?

Let me refer to some objections which may possibly be raised in the course of this debate. First, objection may be taken to the machinery proposed for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. Any reform of this kind with regard to local government must necessarily be faced with certain difficulties. You cannot carry out any such reform without meeting and overcoming a number of technical and administrative difficulties. But the inevitable trend of the times is in the direction of granting more and more self governing powers to local authorities. One of two policies must be adopted. We must either go in for further centralisation, or we must go in for decentralisation. Having regard to the constantly increasing importance of the place which local self-government occupies in the public life of this country, I think it will be admitted that it is impossible for us to follow the first course. We must, in the long run, go along the line indicated by the provisions of this Bill. One or two things are perfectly plain. The reform proposed in procedure by the Bill is urgently needed. There is no doubt about that, and, as has been pointed out, it is asked for, not by any party, or by any section of the community, but by the great majority of the local authorities themselves. The demand further has been endorsed, not only by the representatives of the local authorities and County Councils, but by many men holding high and honourable positions in the country. Those who were present at the deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, must have seen that the members of that deputation belonged principally to the Party which supports the Government in this House. It cannot, therefore, be said that this is in any sense a Party Bill. It is a small step, but nevertheless a very useful one, in the right direction, and I trust that, whatever technical difficulties may be raised in the course of this debate with regard to the application of machinery proposed in the Bill, the House will assent to the Second Reading of the measure, and thereby put it on record that the time has come when some such reform should be carried out in the interest of the local government of the people of Wales. I desire to support the Second Reading of this Bill.

*(1.5.) MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorganshire, S.): I agree with a good deal of what the mover and seconder of the Bill have said, more especially with the remarks they have made on the subject of devolution. I believe myself—and I think my views are shared by every Member of the House—that the time has come when a great deal of the work which is now being done by our central departments in London might very well be done by local bodies in the country. I for one am fully prepared to support a step in that direction, always provided that the system to be handed over to the County Councils or other bodies is applicable to England as well as to Wales. Now, Sir, on the surface the measure bears the appearance of reasonableness and moderation, but, taking the Bill as a whole, it is not one which I, as a Welsh Unionist, consider it my duty to support. I object to it in the first instance because, as far as I am aware, it is not demanded by any considerable number of the people in Wales. Again, I cannot but consider that if its provisions are carried into law it will in no way tend towards the improvement and efficiency of local government in that country. The House is asked to place its trust in an authority, the constitution and working of the machinery of which it is quite ignorant of. If there is any real desire on the part of the Welsh people for legislation of this kind, all I can say is that I have

heard nothing about it. No resolutions framed by the County Councils in the Principality have been forwarded to me. For the last seven years it has been my privilege to sit for one of the largest and most important constituencies in South Wales, but during the whole of that time I cannot recollect a single occasion on which anybody has approached me with regard to this subject, nor has one of the electors in my division informed me that he considers legislation of this kind necessary for Wales. Every hon. Member is aware that the electors of the present day are not in any way diffident about approaching their Members, or their would-be Members, with regard to the political questions which may be of interest to them; and I must say that if legislation of this kind is earnestly desired by the people of Glamorgan, it is very extraordinary that not one of its electors has yet approached me on the subject.

I also confess my inability to see in what way, should this measure pass into law, it will benefit the local government of the Principality. Regarding the powers sought to be conferred on the County Councils, it is conceded by the Act of 1888 that the Local Government Board can confer on the County Councils many of the powers sought for by the Bill by means of Provisional Orders. An attempt to obtain powers of this kind was made in 1889, but there was intense opposition to this step on behalf of the non-county boroughs, and owing to that action the attempt failed. Jndging by an answer given in the House the other day by the President of the Local Government Board, the feeling on the part of the non-county boroughs is, if anything, more intense now than it was in the year to which I have referred.

The main object of the Bill, however, is not the transfer of these powers to the County Councils, but the creation of a Joint Counties Board by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Bill. But, bearing in mind that the Local Government Board can already, by the Act of 1888, delegate powers to the County Council very similar to those mentioned in the schedule of that Bill, and also by the same Act can form Joint Committees of the County Councils for joint purposes, I fail to see what a Joint Counties Board, if created, can do more than can be done already. Supposing we had a Joint Counties Board, we should have still the same kind of gentlemen, dealing, as far as I know, with the same kind of measures, and probably with the same kind of result. I have listened with great interest to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I am bound to say that I cannot agree with what they have said. As to the view expressed of increasing the efficiency of local government in Wales, I do not think this Bill will accomplish that object, and I do not think any good will accrue from the measure we are now discussing.

The framers of the Bill have done very little more than sketch the constitution of the body they seek to establish, and I for one am absolutely opposed to granting power to a new authority the constitution and machinery of which I know so little about. What will be the numerical strength of this Board? Where will its work be held? Is it to have a separate and expensive staff? Where is the cost of its proceedings to be checked? I maintain that matters of this kind ought not to be left out of the present discussion. These questions demand a satisfactory answer before the House can allow the powers sought in this Bill to be transferred to a new authority. I for one should infinitely prefer to continue the present trust in the County Councils rather than in a body which we know so little about.

One thing, to my mind, is perfectly plain, and that is that if these joint Boards were established, they would be politically of one colour only. The Welsh County Councils for many years past have been dominated by one political Party only, and as the majority of the County Councillors would have the election of the delegates to serve on the new Board. We can only imagine and presume that the new executive would be strongly permeated with political views of one kind. That constitutes a very grave menace to the peace of Wales. I say this with all respect to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I certainly do not mean to cast the slightest reflection on the integrity and honesty of purpose of those gentlemen who now serve

on the Welsh County Councils. At the same time, on an occasion like this, and with the experience of the past to guide us, Unionists cannot dismiss these considerations from their minds. But I take a broader objection to the measure than that. The Bill deals only with Wales and Monmouthshire, and I object to special legislation for Wales unless there is some good and special reason to the contrary. I quite admit that there have been matters in this connection which call for special legislation, to wit, the Intermediate Education Act, which has already been mentioned. When that Act was brought forward Wales was suffering from a want of secondary education, and was far behind the rest of the United Kingdom. Therefore, it was only right and proper that they should have that privilege conferred upon them. I do not consider that Wales is entitled to more consideration than the rest of the United Kingdom, and I trust that if any addition or alteration is to be made in the system of local government, it will not be applied to one area only, but will be conferred on the whole country at large. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

*(1.14.) MR. GUEST (Plymouth): I desire to associate myself with the hon. Member who has just sat down in recognising the moderation of the mover and seconder of this Bill. I admit that, on the face of it, this Bill seems plausible enough. It promises two things—(1) to transfer the powers now exercised by the Local Government Board and other Departments to the local authorities; and (2) to create a County Board for not less than five counties for the purpose of exercising these powers. It has been said by the mover of this Bill that such a provision was contemplated in the Provisional Order 1889 under Section 10 of the Local Government Act of 1888. In the first place, any comparison between the present Bill and the Provisional Order of 1889 will show that the powers sought to be acquired are much more numerous than were contemplated by the Provisional Order, and not only this, but they are also more far-reaching.

I would like to ask the House, before proceeding further, whether it is supposed that these powers, if granted, will be considered sufficient. The question is whether they will stop there, or whether, once having got these powers, a further demand will be made by this House to give still wider and more far-reaching powers. An association of five County Councils may represent nearly a million inhabitants, and a body which represents so large a number of people will undoubtedly be a very strong body, very difficult to resist, and will have great power and ability to press its claims upon the House. In that respect I would remind hon. Members of the present pretensions of the London County Council, who not very long ago proposed to build, within a stone's throw of this House, a sort of Hotel de Ville which was to overshadow and rival even the authority and dignity of this House.

I do not intend to discuss the future possible developments of this scheme in detail, but I will confine myself to the actual proposal before the House. In this Bill there is a definite principle involved. It is this. When Parliament has from time to time created local authorities and has invested them with powers which, in the public interest, very often infringe upon the ordinary rights of the individual or private property, it has always adhered to the principle of keeping a large and wide control in the hands of the central authority. It has always been provided that the sanction of the Local Government Board, the Board of Trade, or the Education Department should first be obtained. It is done in the interest of three classes —in the first place the individual, then the minority, and lastly posterity. It is sought to safeguard posterity from the extravagance, recklessness, or indifference of the present generation. It is sought to obtain for minorities a hearing. It is sought to protect the individual against unfairness which might result from local prejudice or other small causes of a local character. In this Bill this principle is undermined. The Local Government Board up to the present time has been in the position of a Court of Appeal, and has in many instances exercised a sort of paternal despotism over the local authorities. That power is to be transferred

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

(12.15.) MR. EDWARDS (Radnorshire): I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, which has the support of many Unionists in Wales. The Bill has been referred to in some portions of the Welsh Press as though it were a measure to establish Home Rule for Wales. This is a complete misapprehension. Home Rule implies the granting of legislative powers, and there are no such powers in this Bill. It is confined to matters of a purely administrative character. If this is a Home Rule Bill, then the same may be said of the Local Government Act of 1888, for this Bill only seeks in a modest way to extend the powers already granted by that Act.

As is seen from the Memorandum, the Bill has two objects. The first is to transfer to the councils of counties and county boroughs certain functions at present performed by Departments of the Central Government. These functions are of an administrative character, and are specified in the Schedule. I may say that through an oversight the words, "councils of county boroughs," were omitted from Clause 1 of the Bill, and that Clause should be read as if those words were included. A few of these powers are now vested in the Privy Council and the Home Secretary, but the greater part of them belong to the Local Government Board. Some of these powers are very useful, and should by all means be delegated to local authorities. For instance, take the Public Health Act of 1875. Certain sections of that Act included in the Schedule refer to matters connected with sanitation. Now, some may think this is a small matter, but it is really an important matter. Why should it be necessary to apply to the Local Government Board for power to move in such a matter as this? It is a matter in which very often it is important that you should move quickly. But it is well known that owing to the overworked condition of the Local Government Board and other Departments it is impossible to do this. The sections of the Act to which I have referred give the Local Government Board power to order and sanction certain sanitary works. Why not give this power to the County Councils? They know the circumstances of the case, and they have medical officers quite capable of dealing effectively with the matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (MR. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): How many counties have medical officers?

MR. EDWARDS: I cannot say how many, but take Glamorgan for instance. There you have a most able medical officer of health. He is quite as capable of forming a correct opinion in such matters as any medical officer whom the Local Government may send down. His reports are masterly and are quoted by medical and other journals. Is it not reasonable to employ such a man as this, who has local knowledge of the circumstances of the case in addition to his other qualifications, rather than some stranger whom the Local Government Board may send down to inquire and report?

Closely allied to this subject is the power given to the Local Government Board under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, to require a local authority to deal with premises unfit for human habitation. There is a good deal of disappointment felt at the failure of this Act. It has not done the good that was expected of it. Why is that? May it not be because the machinery for putting the Act into force is too cumbrous and remote; and, further, because there is not sufficient driving power to work the machinery as it should be worked. The Local Government Board has to administer a vast area, and therefore must look with comparative indifference on individual cases. On the other hand, if the County Council were given this work to do, its direct interest in the success of the work would induce it to see that it was well and speedily done. Petitions would come asking for something to be done; the Medical Officer of the County Council would report quickly; the County Council could decide promptly; and thus with little trouble or delay useful work could be done which is now not even begun,

from fear of the tedious delay which is anticipated over it. Then take Section 2 of the Public Health Act, 1885; what a paltry power that is to reserve to the important machinery of the Local Government Board. Why not leave such a matter to the County Council, which knows the circumstances and can deal promptly with it?

The second object of the Bill is to provide machinery for the creation of a Joint Counties Board. It is provided that any five or more Councils of counties or county boroughs may combine to frame a scheme for the establishment of a Joint Counties Board. Exception is taken in some quarters to this provision, but section 81 of the Local Government Act of 1888 conferred the power of combination, only in a lesser degree and in a different manner. There is, therefore, nothing inherently objectionable, in a scheme such as the House has already sanctioned. But it may be asked, why should it be necessary to confer such power by this Bill, when it is already included in the Act of 1888? The answer is simple. We say that the power of combination conferred by the Act of 1888 is inoperative. This is shown by the answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board to my hon. friend the Member for Merthyr on the 6th March last. My hon. friend asked the President of the Local Government Board if he could state to what extent the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire had availed themselves of Section 81 of the Local Government Act, 1888, empowering them to take combined action for any purpose in respect of which they are jointly interested. The reply was that the Board was unable to state to what extent the powers conferred by the section mentioned had been acted upon. They knew of one case of the kind. The power of combination given by the Act of 1888 has practically remained a dead letter, as is shown by this statement. Why is this? To a great extent because it has been found that there are very few subjects included in the Act of 1888 on which County Councils can jointly combine. To some extent because of the lack of simple and effective machinery for carrying out the intentions of the Act in this respect. It is a matter of common knowledge that, taking the Act as it stands, combination between the County Councils is not easy. Take the case of the Welsh County Council Association. That was a body formed for the purpose of deliberating about matters of interest to Wales. What became of that body? It was starved to death. The Welsh County Council Association consulted the Local Government Board as to whether they could under the Act of 1888 pay the expenses incidental to the organisation and the meetings of the body. The Local Government Board replied that they could not do so. Therefore the Association, which might have been very helpful to Wales in many ways, had to be abandoned, because there was no power under the Act of 1888 to keep it alive.

We propose that when any five or more councils of counties or county boroughs wish to combine for any administrative purposes common to them all they may make a scheme for setting up what we call a Joint Counties Board to represent them. We have adopted the number five because we think a body composed of the representatives of five or more Councils is likely to have more weight and authority than that composed of a lesser number. Such a body is a fitter object for the transference of important administrative functions, such as the authorising of loans. What a cumbrous process this is at present! A demand is made for a loan to be authorised. After some delay an inquiry is ordered; eventually the inquiry takes place. Then there is the report to be drawn up: that report has to be considered and a decision taken on it: this may mean waiting for months. Then still further inquiries may be needed before the authorisation is granted, and this means more delay; meanwhile the expectant borrowers become anxious and try to stir up the officials of the Board. But the reply of the harassed officials is that the applicants must remember that they are not the only borrowers in the country, and that they must wait patiently and take their turn. Now, surely this is a power which might safely and usefully be delegated to a Joint Counties Board. Such a Board would do its work more on the spot — with greater local knowledge, which is an important factor, and with

Member for Glamorgan, with regard to the financial relations between Wales and the United Kingdom. I am not going into that question now, but it may be of interest to remark that on that occasion a very good case was made out for the claim of Wales for a diminution of the share of the principality in Imperial taxation. The question of expense is one which ought to engage the attention of the House. There is no doubt it is urgently necessary that some step should be taken in the direction of Clause 1 of the Bill. It would be good for the Department itself; it would be an admirable thing for the local authorities and we believe also that it would be good for the Imperial Parliament.

Let me say one or two words with regard to the history of this question. The question of the devolution of certain administrative powers from the Central Department to local authorities is not one of recent date or origin. For many years it has occupied the mind of the country—not merely in one portion, but in all parts. Some years ago this question was very much agitated in Scotland, and hon. Members opposite will, no doubt, remember a series of very able articles written for the *Scotsman* in 1886 or 1887, which seemed to show that, at all events, Scotland had made up its mind on the desirability of such a change even at that time. During the last fifteen years almost all responsible statesman have expressed themselves very clearly on this subject. I need quote but one case—that of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, who in 1889 said he believed it was in the interest of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland that local government shoud be conceded in the amplest sense; that not only county but municipal institutions should be completed and perfected, and, going beyond that, there might well be created greater authorities with a wider scope and fuller powers. That was a rather remarkable declaration on this subject by one who now exercises a dominant influence in the public life of this country. He has said that "what he has said he has said," and it would be interesting today to hear him on this question—small, perhaps, in regard to its actual scope, but very important in principle—and to be told whether the right hon. Gentleman still adheres to the opinion he expressed in 1889. As my hon. friend has pointed out there is nothing in this Bill touching the question of the devolution of legislative powers; it is concerned only with administrative matters. It may be said that if that is so the question of the congestion of business in the House of Commons has no direct relevance to the principle involved in the measure, but I contend that there is a direct connection between the congested state of public business in this House, and the power of criticising, as we ought to criticise, the policy pursued by the various central Departments. There can be no doubt as to the present state of matters in Parliament. During the last twenty years great changes have taken place in the social structures of this country, far and wide-reaching in their effects, and the burden of legislation has become most oppressive and pressing upon those who are responsible for the conduct of business in the central Departments. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division had been present I am sure he would have been willing to re-echo the words he uttered in this House when he held that office, with respect to the great congestion of business in his Department. Would it not be well to sanction the principle involved in this Bill, in the interest of the efficient conduct of public business by the Departments, and of the relief to the work of this House? Would it not, I ask, be wise on these grounds to delegate certain well-defined administrative powers to those local authorities in Wales who desire to exercise them?

There are one or two special grounds upon which this request is especially based. In the first place it must be remembered that the spirit of Welsh nationality is not declining; it is, in fact, a growing force in Wales. In the second place we have already had separate treatment in regard to legislation with reference to Sunday Closing and Education. There is this further fact which seems to me to be important when you come to consider whether the local authorities in Wales are fitted to discharge the duties with which this Bill proposes to entrust them, viz., the fact that the great majority of the people of Wales have been trained for local government in a school, and by duties imposed upon them by their church life which is instinct with the

democratic principle. Anybody who knows anything of the inner life of Wales must know that by a long period of training in local government with regard to the higher interests of life they have been brought under conditions which render them specially qualified to discharge the duties of administering local government. The experience of County Council work in Wales, and the way in which the Welsh people have built up and carried on their educational system, go to prove that there is a special fitness in this demand of the local authorities. If it be right to entrust the local authorities with the supreme duty of educating the children of the country, is it not reasonable to assume that they are able and fitted to discharge the administrative functions mentioned in this Bill?

Let me refer to some objections which may possibly be raised in the course of this debate. First, objection may be taken to the machinery proposed for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. Any reform of this kind with regard to local government must necessarily be faced with certain difficulties. You cannot carry out any such reform without meeting and overcoming a number of technical and administrative difficulties. But the inevitable trend of the times is in the direction of granting more and more self governing powers to local authorities. One of two policies must be adopted. We must either go in for further centralisation, or we must go in for decentralisation. Having regard to the constantly increasing importance of the place which local self-government occupies in the public life of this country, I think it will be admitted that it is impossible for us to follow the first course. We must, in the long run, go along the line indicated by the provisions of this Bill. One or two things are perfectly plain. The reform proposed in procedure by the Bill is urgently needed. There is no doubt about that, and, as has been pointed out, it is asked for, not by any party, or by any section of the community, but by the great majority of the local authorities themselves. The demand further has been endorsed, not only by the representatives of the local authorities and County Councils, but by many men holding high and honourable positions in the country. Those who were present at the deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, must have seen that the members of that deputation belonged principally to the Party which supports the Government in this House. It cannot, therefore, be said that this is in any sense a Party Bill. It is a small step, but nevertheless a very useful one, in the right direction, and I trust that, whatever technical difficulties may be raised in the course of this debate with regard to the application of machinery proposed in the Bill, the House will assent to the Second Reading of the measure, and thereby put it on record that the time has come when some such reform should be carried out in the interest of the local government of the people of Wales. I desire to support the Second Reading of this Bill.

*(1.5.) MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorganshire, S.): I agree with a good deal of what the mover and seconder of the Bill have said, more especially with the remarks they have made on the subject of devolution. I believe myself—and I think my views are shared by every Member of the House—that the time has come when a great deal of the work which is now being done by our central departments in London might very well be done by local bodies in the country. I for one am fully prepared to support a step in that direction, always provided that the system to be handed over to the County Councils or other bodies is applicable to England as well as to Wales. Now, Sir, on the surface the measure bears the appearance of reasonableness and moderation, but, taking the Bill as a whole, it is not one which I, as a Welsh Unionist, consider it my duty to support. I object to it in the first instance because, as far as I am aware, it is not demanded by any considerable number of the people in Wales. Again, I cannot but consider that if its provisions are carried into law it will in no way tend towards the improvement and efficiency of local government in that country. The House is asked to place its trust in an authority, the constitution and working of the machinery of which it is quite ignorant of. If there is any real desire on the part of the Welsh people for legislation of this kind, all I can say is that I have

heard nothing about it. No resolutions framed by the County Councils in the Principality have been forwarded to me. For the last seven years it has been my privilege to sit for one of the largest and most important constituencies in South Wales, but during the whole of that time I cannot recollect a single occasion on which anybody has approached me with regard to this subject, nor has one of the electors in my division informed me that he considers legislation of this kind necessary for Wales. Every hon. Member is aware that the electors of the present day are not in any way diffident about approaching their Members, or their would-be Members, with regard to the political questions which may be of interest to them; and I must say that if legislation of this kind is earnestly desired by the people of Glamorgan, it is very extraordinary that not one of its electors has yet approached me on the subject.

I also confess my inability to see in what way, should this measure pass into law, it will benefit the local government of the Principality. Regarding the powers sought to be conferred on the County Councils, it is conceded by the Act of 1888 that the Local Government Board can confer on the County Councils many of the powers sought for by the Bill by means of Provisional Orders. An attempt to obtain powers of this kind was made in 1889, but there was intense opposition to this step on behalf of the non-county boroughs, and owing to that action the attempt failed. Jndging by an answer given in the House the other day by the President of the Local Government Board, the feeling on the part of the non-county boroughs is, if anything, more intense now than it was in the year to which I have referred.

The main object of the Bill, however, is not the transfer of these powers to the County Councils, but the creation of a Joint Counties Board by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Bill. But, bearing in mind that the Local Government Board can already, by the Act of 1888, delegate powers to the County Council very similar to those mentioned in the schedule of that Bill, and also by the same Act can form Joint Committees of the County Councils for joint purposes, I fail to see what a Joint Counties Board, if created, can do more than can be done already. Supposing we had a Joint Counties Board, we should have still the same kind of gentlemen, dealing, as far as I know, with the same kind of measures, and probably with the same kind of result. I have listened with great interest to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I am bound to say that I cannot agree with what they have said. As to the view expressed of increasing the efficiency of local government in Wales, I do not think this Bill will accomplish that object, and I do not think any good will accrue from the measure we are now discussing.

The framers of the Bill have done very little more than sketch the constitution of the body they seek to establish, and I for one am absolutely opposed to granting power to a new authority the constitution and machinery of which I know so little about. What will be the numerical strength of this Board? Where will its work be held? Is it to have a separate and expensive staff? Where is the cost of its proceedings to be checked? I maintain that matters of this kind ought not to be left out of the present discussion. These questions demand a satisfactory answer before the House can allow the powers sought in this Bill to be transferred to a new authority. I for one should infinitely prefer to continue the present trust in the County Councils rather than in a body which we know so little about.

One thing, to my mind, is perfectly plain, and that is that if these joint Boards were established, they would be politically of one colour only. The Welsh County Councils for many years past have been dominated by one political Party only, and as the majority of the County Councillors would have the election of the delegates to serve on the new Board. We can only imagine and presume that the new executive would be strongly permeated with political views of one kind. That constitutes a very grave menace to the peace of Wales. I say this with all respect to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I certainly do not mean to cast the slightest reflection on the integrity and honesty of purpose of those gentlemen who now serve

Major Wyndham-Quin.

on the Welsh County Councils. At the same time, on an occasion like this, and with the experience of the past to guide us, Unionists cannot dismiss these considerations from their minds. But I take a broader objection to the measure than that. The Bill deals only with Wales and Monmouthshire, and I object to special legislation for Wales unless there is some good and special reason to the contrary. I quite admit that there have been matters in this connection which call for special legislation, to wit, the Intermediate Education Act, which has already been mentioned. When that Act was brought forward Wales was suffering from a want of secondary education, and was far behind the rest of the United Kingdom. Therefore, it was only right and proper that they should have that privilege conferred upon them. I do not consider that Wales is entitled to more consideration than the rest of the United Kingdom, and I trust that if any addition or alteration is to be made in the system of local government, it will not be applied to one area only, but will be conferred on the whole country at large. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

*(1.14.) MR. GUEST (Plymouth): I desire to associate myself with the hon. Member who has just sat down in recognising the moderation of the mover and seconder of this Bill. I admit that, on the face of it, this Bill seems plausible enough. It promises two things—(1) to transfer the powers now exercised by the Local Government Board and other Departments to the local authorities; and (2) to create a County Board for not less than five counties for the purpose of exercising these powers. It has been said by the mover of this Bill that such a provision was contemplated in the Provisional Order 1889 under Section 10 of the Local Government Act of 1888. In the first place, any comparison between the present Bill and the Provisional Order of 1889 will show that the powers sought to be acquired are much more numerous than were contemplated by the Provisional Order, and not only this, but they are also more far-reaching.

I would like to ask the House, before proceeding further, whether it is supposed that these powers, if granted, will be considered sufficient. The question is whether they will stop there, or whether, once having got these powers, a further demand will be made by this House to give still wider and more far-reaching powers. An association of five County Councils may represent nearly a million inhabitants, and a body which represents so large a number of people will undoubtedly be a very strong body, very difficult to resist, and will have great power and ability to press its claims upon the House. In that respect I would remind hon. Members of the present pretensions of the London County Council, who not very long ago proposed to build, within a stone's throw of this House, a sort of Hotel de Ville which was to overshadow and rival even the authority and dignity of this House.

I do not intend to discuss the future possible developments of this scheme in detail, but I will confine myself to the actual proposal before the House. In this Bill there is a definite principle involved. It is this. When Parliament has from time to time created local authorities and has invested them with powers which, in the public interest, very often infringe upon the ordinary rights of the individual or private property, it has always adhered to the principle of keeping a large and wide control in the hands of the central authority. It has always been provided that the sanction of the Local Government Board, the Board of Trade, or the Education Department should first be obtained. It is done in the interest of three classes—in the first place the individual, then the minority, and lastly posterity. It is sought to safeguard posterity from the extravagance, recklessness, or indifference of the present generation. It is sought to obtain for minorities a hearing. It is sought to protect the individual against unfairness which might result from local prejudice or other small causes of a local character. In this Bill this principle is undermined. The Local Government Board up to the present time has been in the position of a Court of Appeal, and has in many instances exercised a sort of paternal despotism over the local authorities. That power is to be transferred

from the Local Government Board to the local authorities, and they are to exercise this sort of appellate jurisdiction. To show how serious and far-reaching are the powers which are scheduled in the Bill, if the House will allow me, I will give one or two instances. I shall do this by way of proving my point. If hon. Members will look to the schedule of this Bill, they will find it contains Section 229 of the Public Health Act, which deals with the question of "special expenses." Hon. Members know that this matter of "special expenses" is just one of those cases where the State has reserved to itself the right of interpretation of the Public Health Act. Under this clause certain expenses incurred by the parish may be scheduled as "special expenses," if they ought to be so, according to well defined grounds, and the result of that is, that the owners of agricultural land, railway companies, and other bodies only pay a quarter of the rate. Now, supposing a local authority were not to schedule these as "special expenses," the effect would be that those agricultural lands would have to pay half the parish rate. That is to say, the agricultural lands would only benefit to the extent allowed by the Agricultural Rating Act, and railways would have to pay the full rate. I find, farther down in the schedule, Section 276 of the Public Health Act, which gives power—

"To grant to rural district or contributory place (on due application) provisions of Public Health Act which are in force in urban districts; and conditionally or unconditionally to invest such rural authority with all or any of the powers, duties, etc., of an urban authority under the Act."

Now the Local Government Board itself, as I understand, has been sometimes blamed for granting those powers in the past, and it has given rise, as hon. Members will remember, to discussion in the newspapers with regard to the grounds of restriction which the Rural District Councils have imposed on buildings and such things which have not been suitable to those areas. I contend that the County Councils Board, if this Bill were passed, might be tempted for reasons other than those which would affect the Local Government Board—reasons of desiring to gain popularity to the Rural District Council—to grant powers to the Rural Districts. There is also included in the schedule the clause in the Public Health Act, by which an owner has the right of appeal to the Local Government Board against his share in the expense as fixed by the local authority. Here is a distinct case of taking from the ratepayer the right of appeal to the Local Government Board, and giving it to the County Council. Then lastly, there is the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890. Under this, the Counties Board seek to acquire the powers conferred by Section 8 of the Act which are exercised at present by the Local Government Board. Under Clause 8 of that Act they will have power to institute a local inquiry into the objections of the owners and lessees of property. There, again, the interest of the individual has been safeguarded, and the decision has been left in the hands of the Local Government Board. I only quote these instances to show that my contention that new principles are involved in this Bill, and that there is going to be a very great change introduced, is not visionary. I have shown that from the clauses I have referred to and I say that in my humble judgment, such powers as I have cited ought not to be entrusted to the local authority at all.

Further, I would ask—What is this local authority to whom it is proposed to entrust these powers? As my hon. friend who moved the rejection of the Bill has shown, it is a sort of undefined nebulous and incoate authority. It is a voluntary association representing not less than five councils of counties or of county boroughs. They are, as far as I can see from the provisions of the Bill, not necessarily contiguous. There may be one County Council in one part of Wales and another County Council in another part. They may contain within their areas persons or bodies who entirely dissent from this association. My hon. friend mentioned that the Provisional Order of 1889 was wrecked just on account of the objection that the non-county boroughs, which would be included in the County Council, had to come under the jurisdiction of the County Council at all. In fact, they very much prefer the authority of the Local Government Board to that of the County Council. I am bound to say that I cannot consider that this is a properly constituted authority for the

exercise of those powers. I would draw attention, in passing, to the curious constitution of these Boards which is contemplated in this Bill, and to the procedure generally. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have been throughout this session very often throwing in the teeth of the Government, and those who support them on this side of the House, the taunt that we are interfering with the traditions of this House and the constitutional usage and practice of this Assembly. But I notice that when hon. Members opposite have some fad to promote they do not object to depart from constitutional practice, and the constitution as understood in this land for centuries is at once thrown overboard. It is a fundamental principle of our constitution that a measure which is rejected in one House is rejected altogether, and that measures that pass one House may be rejected in the other and lost, but in this case it is necessary that the rejection should take place in both Houses within one month. I entirely object to introducing this enormous and far-reaching change in constitutional practice by this sort of side wind legislation of private Members on Wednesday. When I say this about the Bill now before the House, I hope I shall not be considered, any more than my hon. friend, to be an enemy of the principle of devolution, but if we are to have devolution, and if we are to have provincial councils, they must be properly constituted, and the constitution of this voluntary association of County Councils, does not in my opinion at all fulfil the requirements of the case. In fact what is done is this. We are asked to grant to that authority powers which are far too important for an authority such as this, but not sufficiently important to attract to that body the volume of talent which may exist in the district, nor to draw the public attention and imagination, which alone are really in my humble judgment sufficient to maintain a high standard of usefulness and probity in such bodies; and therefore on the one hand it asks too much, and on the other not enough to make it sufficiently important to attract the best men to the service. Taking municipal government generally I do not think it is unfair to say that, although in the matter of strict probity the conduct of municipal government is probably higher in this country than in any other in the world, municipalities have not been altogether free from the taint of corruption, or jobbery, or undue influence. It is only too well known to all hon. Members from their own experience that municipal government in this country does not attract the very best men to the surface.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): Does the hon. Gentleman allege corruption or jobbery against any municipal institution in Wales?

*MR. GUEST: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I was only speaking generally of municipal government in this country. I was speaking generally with regard to England, Scotland, and Wales, and I assert that it has not been altogether free from that taint. No less responsible a person than Lord Rosebery has frequently said that the municipal government of this country does not, unfortunately, attract the best men to it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Has it been as bad as the jobbery in horses in connection with the War Office?

*MR. GUEST: The hon. Member will have an opportunity of speaking afterwards. So far as devolution is concerned we may have provincial councils, and I think they may come in the life time of many of us. At any rate we must admit that it is a very large and important question, and I hope that when it is brought in it will be simultaneous, universal, and obligatory throughout the whole country. When that is done it will be necessary to have much greater regard to the requirements of the case than is contemplated in the Bill. Much as I sympathise and always will sympathise with Welsh nationality, I think it is desirable to avoid the reactionary ideas which racial differences are sometimes apt to foster. I have only one point more to mention, and that is the question of expense, I think the question of expense is generally left to the last if it is put in at all. I would ask the House whether this is the time

in our financial position, both national and municipal, to encourage the further expenditure of money. Economy is all very well on Budget night. Hon. Members get up and urge that we should be economical, but when it comes to arresting expenditure they sometimes take another course. Now is the time to discourage legislation which would involve this country in further expenditure. I do not know what the hon. Member who seconded the Bill meant when he alluded to some idea of getting money out of a central authority or the present County Council. But it does not seem to be a matter of very much importance where it comes from. It will come eventually out of the rates, and the ratepayers will have to contribute to render the scheme possible. It will not be a cheap scheme. The Counties Board will require a large staff of experts, and local inquiries will have to be held. They will require probably new buildings to be put up at great expense, and in fact the scheme will involve the counties concerned in an indefinite expenditure of money. For these reasons I hope the House will accede to the appeal of my hon. friend and reject this measure. It seems to me to be immature and premature. It may serve to show the direction of the public mind in desiring the granting of greater powers to local authorities. It may serve to show the trend of public opinion towards the devolution of the work of the Parliament or central Departments, but in the way it is brought forward in this House it seems to me to be unnecessary, harmful, and valueless, and I have no hesitation in agreeing with my hon. friend who moved the rejection of the measure.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Colonel Wyndham-Quin.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(1.37.) MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): This Bill was introduced in speeches conspicuous for their moderation and reasonableness by my two hon. friends behind me, and I think it is only right to acknowledge that it has been opposed not by declamation but by argument by both the hon. Gentlemen who have just sat down. Perhaps I may be allowed to congratulate the hon. Gentleman who immediately preceded me upon the extreme ability which characterised his criticisms of this Bill. I can only regret, if I may be allowed to say so, that he should have thought it necessary or proper to make an attack not on the probity but on the ability of the County Councils, which in Wales, I think, even more conspicuously than in any other part of the United Kingdom, have attracted, and continue to attract, more and more in proportion as Parliament adds to the importance of their functions, the best public spirit and the highest administrative ability which the community have at its disposal.

I may here observe that I do not think it necessary for an English or a Scottish Member to apologise for taking part in this debate. It is not a matter that affects Wales alone but the whole of the United Kingdom, because the principles upon which this Bill is based are principles which, although I am strongly of opinion they ought to be applied step by step and stage by stage according to the different conditions of the different localities concerned, are yet principles which, if valid at all, are valid as regards the kingdom at large. Both the hon. Members opposite have told us that they are in favour of devolution, but I have constantly observed that persons who profess themselves strongly in favour of an abstract or general principle, such as devolution, when it comes to the most modest instalment of detail to give something like practical effect to that principle in a concrete case, are sudde ly staggered by the enormous difficulties with which the attempt is confronted and surrounded. For my part, being a strong supporter of the principle of devolution, I feel that in the gradual extension of that principle is to be found the only remedy for the congestion which paralyses the efficiency of both Imperial legislation and administration at the present time. That being my strong and confirmed belief at the present time, whenever I find an attempt of this kind made to give practical effect to the principle, I look upon it with a favourable predisposition, and I

try not to magnify but to minimise the difficulties; and when, for instance, the hon. Member opposite is able to point to this or that power which it would be inexpedient or unsafe to entrust to the County Councils or Joint Boards, I agree that that is a fair matter for discussion in Committee. It may be, and I daresay it is the case in a long and complicated schedule like this, that every power that the promoters of the Bill propose to vest in the County Councils and county authorities is not a power which could be wisely taken away from the Central Government; but I do say the most cursory inspection serves to show that there is a large number of powers which are at present exercised by the central authority which are of an extremely routine description, which do not raise in their application any large question of general policy or principle, and the continued exercise of which by the central department in Whitehall, far removed from the spot and necessarily ignorant of the local conditions of the community, involves delay, obstruction, and very often injustice. While it may be conceded that there may be, and probably are, in this long list some powers that it would be wise to keep in the hands of the central authority, at the same time there are a large number which might safely and wisely be entrusted to the County Councils and other local authorities. Therefore let us try, when, but only when, this Bill has been read a second time, to remove the excrescences which are bound always to be found in a measure of this kind.

What other objections are there beyond the objections of detail? It is not disputed that the Welsh people, or rather the representatives of the Welsh people for administrative and municipal purposes, the County Councils of Wales, by an enormous majority, are in favour of this Bill, or something carrying out the main principle of this Bill. It is conceded also, I think, that as regards a large number of powers, they are powers which are fit to be entrusted to local bodies. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will not adopt a non-compromising attitude of opposition on that head. What are the local conditions of Wales? The great majority of the non-county boroughs are of small size, and we have in Wales no large number of communities of considerable size and wealth. with a separate, autonmous, independent local existence apart from the geographical county to which they belong. This constitutes the real essence of the case. And this brings me to the important point which has been urged, that we ought not in any circumstances to give to Wales distinct or separate treatment. I traverse that doctrine altogether. I think as a doctrine it is a masterpiece of political pedantry. There are real, genuine, deep-seated differences of local conditions in Wales and England; and in these circumstances why should we not, in a matter of this kind, apply the principle of separate treatment? I never heard of such a doctrine as that, however great the variation in local conditions may be, we must apply the same measure to all. The United Kingdom derives its real unity not merely from the common sense of citizenship and the common system of law which prevails, but from the fact that the House has always endeavoured, with melancholy, regrettable, and in the case of Ireland with almost fatal exceptions, to recognise and realise differences of history, of local conditions, of tradition, of necessity, of ideal and aspiration between the component parts of the United Kingdom. In this treatment consists the secret by which the unity of the United Kingdom is preserved. There is nothing revolutionary or novel in the suggestion that different treatment should be accorded to Wales in a matter of this kind. There is in the legislation for intermediate education in Wales, a conspicuous illustration of the success with which the difference of local conditions in the great educational problem has been handled. The Intermediate Education Act was passed by a Conservative Government, and it was a measure of which they may well be proud. Why, therefore, in a case where difference of condition is proved, should the doctrine of identity of treatment be insisted upon?

*(1.52.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone S.): The only title I have for intervening in this debate is that in 1898 I was member of the Departmental Committee which inquired into the working of the Local Board, with especial reference to this question. That Committee was presided

over by a very old Member of this House, Sir John Hibbert. I agree with the right hon. Member for East Fife that the principle underlying this measure is of vital importance, not only to the State Departments of the country, but to the House itself. I believe that in much we are doing at the present time in the attempt to regulate the procedure of the House, we are simply attempting to dodge a great fact—and that is that the House and the State Departments are alike carrying a load which they are totally unable to carry. Every member of that Committee came to the consideration of this question in a friendly and appreciative spirit. The question of principle had been conceded by the Local Government Act of 1888. The Local Government Board in the following year promoted a Provisional Order Bill, which passed a Second Reading, and went before a Select Committee. In that Committee it met with a vigorous opposition, not only from the non-county boroughs but from the municipal corporations and large urban district councils. At the time the Departmental Committee sat the Local Government Board was blocked with work, and the municipal corporations were crying out about the delay that took place in the consideration of their demands. A scheme on behalf of the County Councils Association was formulated before the Committee. It was an extremely strong Committee. Witnesses appeared from the non-county boroughs and the urban districts. It was found absolutely impossible to harmonise the different bodies. The Committee found that the feeling of opposition and bitterness between these bodies was as strong in 1898 as it had been in 1888, when it wrecked the Provisional Order Bill. They found that the relations between the several authorities were not such as to render devolution possible at that moment. The question arises then—Has any change taken place since 1898? That is the real question. Is there anything in the Welsh County Councils to disqualify them from the exercise of these powers now? I entirely approve the principle of the Bill, because I believe it is becoming more and more clear that the principle of devolution is forcing itself upon our attention, not only in the great Departments but in the House itself, whether we like it or not. I am not concerned about the schedule of the Bill. It is a question for Committee. When I saw Parliament commit to the Local Government Board the duty of regulating the use of steam whistles in factories, I felt that there was much to be said for any Bill which would delegate such powers to the local authority. The main question is whether the local authorities, outside the County Councils, are favourable to the change; and a secondary consideration is whether there is anything in the *personnel* of the County Councils of Wales which disqualifies those bodies from the exercise of these powers. I do not think that that will be said. (2.3.)

*(2.35.) MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I desire to say a few words upon the important Bill now under the consideration of the House. My hon. friend the Member for Radnor explained so clearly the provisions of this measure, and its objects are so well described in the Memorandum of the Bill, which has been circulated, that it is not necessary for me to go further into the actual machinery which this Bill proposes to create in regard to Wales and Monmouthshire. The general result of the discussion which has taken place appears to be this: The Bill raises two questions of principle, and I venture to state to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and to the Government also, that they should not allow their decision on these two questions of principle to be influenced by any questions which may arise as to the items in the schedule of this Bill. The first principle which is raised by the Bill is—Is it or is it not expedient to grant to County Councils in some form or other larger powers than they have at the present time? In other words, it is a question of decentralisation, which has been touched upon more than once in this Parliament in regard to Army affairs, and it is a question whether that principle ought not also to be applied to our civil and local government affairs.

The second question which is raised if that principle is assented to is—Is it right that these thirteen counties of

Wales and Monmouthshire should be allowed to lead the way? Is it right that a Bill of this kind, conferring additional powers upon the counties of Wales and Monmouthshire, should be allowed to pass? Before I sit down I wish to say a word or two in reference to both those general questions, and practically my arguments in favour of an affirmative answer to these questions of principle may be developed by criticisms upon the speeches which have been delivered on the opposite side of the House. I am very glad to see the hon. and gallant Member for South Glamorgan in his place. He has been doing excellent service in South Africa in the war there, and I am very glad to welcome him back. The first argument in his very clear speech against our proposal was that there was no effective demand for this measure by the people in the counties concerned. I think that was the principal argument in the first portion of the hon. and gallant Member's speech. I do not think my hon. and gallant friend has really studied Welsh opinion upon this matter. I should like to know if he remembers the meeting which took place during the last Parliament, in which every hon. Member sitting for Wales and Monmouthshire, either on this side or the opposite side, except one or two who were unavoidably prevented from being present, attended a Committee upstairs to discuss a scheme of devolution. I would ask the hon. and gallant Member to remember that the mere fact that from his constituency no individual demand has come from any elector is not a very adequate test of what the general public opinion of these counties is in regard to these matters. In the first place the constituency he represents is chiefly rural; and not only this, it so happens that his constituency is cut off from the general body of Welsh sentiment, owing to historical and other causes. I am not going into details upon this point now, but I should like also to remind the hon. and gallant Member that the principal towns in his constituency are practically off-shoots of Cardiff. The county borough of Cardiff and the county boroughs of Newport and Swansea were all represented upon the recent deputation to the President of the Local Government Board, and there cannot be the least doubt that, without regard to any party consideration, the general body of opinion in the three great county boroughs of South Wales is distinctly in favour of this Bill.

Go farther north and I do not believe that anybody that knows Wales, any one who is acquainted, for instance, with Carnarvonshire and Denbighshire, will deny that those counties have the fullest confidence in their County Councils, and would like to see a devolution of powers which they desire to exercise. I should like, in reference to the very sympathetic speech which fell from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, to say that I believe that the non-county boroughs in South Wales are not opposed to this Bill. I recognise that the position of non-county boroughs ought to be very carefully safeguarded in legislation of this kind, and I would not demur to the general principles suggested by my hon. friend opposite. I have recently had an opportunity of visiting my constituency, and I represent not only part of the county borough of Swansea, but also two very considerable non-county boroughs, and the result of my visit was that, as far as I can ascertain, this Bill is welcomed by both county and non-county boroughs. Of course, I can conceive some cases in which it might be proper that some Amendment should be made in favour of non-county boroughs, but in substance, and treating the matter from a Second Reading point of view, I do not think that the non-county boroughs need have the slightest apprehension in regard to the effect of this measure. The next thing my hon. and gallant friend said was that no good result would be attained by this Bill, and he also stated that he did not think it was worth while devolving these powers upon the County Councils. I think the hon. and gallant Member was a little inconsistent in taking that as an argument against the Bill. He began by saying that the President of the Local Government Board said yesterday, in receiving the deputation alluded to, that in theory he agreed with the deputation, but that the whole question of the devolution of powers ought to be considered, and that on the whole he was in favour of an increase in the powers of local authorities.

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN: Yes, provided it applies all round.

*MR. BRYNMOR JONES: If the right hon. Gentleman and my hon. and gallant friend agree that the time is ripe for a further devolution of powers upon local authorities all round, why is it wrong to make a start by devolving those powers on thirteen counties? If we once admit this principle of devolution, no argument can be properly urged against this Bill upon the ground that it's not worth while to grant these additional powers. My hon. and gallant friend also said that the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire were almost entirely of one political complexion, and he believed he was right in making that statement. I should like to tell the House that, notwithstanding the party complexion of these County Councils, which is exactly parallel with the state of things in some areas of England, and those Welsh County Councils are working in the most harmonious spirit. The minority submit to the majority, and the majority do not use their powers in an aggressive spirit. They recognise what their duties are, and they do their best to carry out the objects for which they were instituted by the legislation of this country. What validity attaches to an argument like that? I do not think my hon. and gallant friend was serious, and I dismiss that from my consideration. By way of criticism of the arguments addressed to the House from the other side, I have nearly exhausted what I wanted to say. I should like to urge four propositions which I think must be admitted to be perfectly accurate. The first part of this Bill will afford considerable relief to us in the House of Commons. We have been debating our rules of procedure at great length, and we know that in no part of the business of the House is there greater difficulty felt than in regard to the Questions addressed to Ministers. A great many of these Questions—I should say roughly nearly fifty per cent. of them—are Questions which concern matters of administration, and the performance of their duties by the public offices represented by the Ministers on that Bench. Now, if these numerous routine duties, referred to in the schedule, were transferred to a combination of four or five County Councils in Wales, relief would result not only to the Ministers at the heads of the Departments, but relief would be given to the House itself. How many letters do we receive week after week complaining of the conduct of this or that Minister? What hon. Member does not know that that is a great and increasing burden on his time? He has to judge whether the subject is of sufficient importance to put a Question to the Minister at all. If it is, it involves trouble to the officials of the House, to Ministers and their subordinates, and trouble to the House itself, from the fact that more important business is being put off while Questions are being asked.

In the second place, this Bill will operate in relief of the work of the public Departments. I do not wish to attack any individual public office; I do not wish to attack any individual Minister. But after some years experience in public life I am bound to say that I do not think the work of the public offices is done in so skilful a way as is generally assumed. I fully acknowledge the great courtesy with which Members are received by Ministers, but I am bound to say that the work is not done with sufficient speed in most offices, and in many cases the decision of the Departments, unless public attention is called in the newspapers to the matter, or unless we can raise a discussion in this House, is unreasonable in the eyes of those who are interested in the locality the decision relates to. I do not propose to delay the House by giving instances in support of this proposition, but this is the opinion my experience has forced upon me. I think this Bill will be of great advantage in regard to nearly all the matters touched upon in the schedules to the localities themselves.

I do not wish to go into the schedule. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment did go into one or two matters mentioned there, but even the most cursory glance at the schedule will show that it is almost impossible, unless you are going to hold a regular public inquiry in which every party interested would be heard, to decide the matter proposed to be devolved properly. Most of the

matters mentioned in the schedule are really matters which ought to be dealt with by the localities themselves. Take for instance the resolution of a Town Council. I have known a case where the opinion of a town council was contrary to the decision of the Department up here. That has happened in my experience more than once. In one case there was an inquiry, and the Department set aside what was the decision of those who were sent down to inquire into the matter on the spot. This is not the time to go into these details, and I will satisfy myself with my general statement.

With regard to the second question, whether it is just and reasonable, if once the principle of devolution is conceded, that this Bill, which only applies to counties and county boroughs in Wales should, quite apart from any notion of nationalism, be passed—why is t necessary that all the counties in Wales, in regard to matters of local government, should be treated in the same way? That principle is not applied invariably. Instances were given by the hon. Member for East Fife where the principle has not been adopted. Why should this hard and fast principle be laid down in matters of this kind? There are many matters, I quite admit, in which the administration of the law throughout the whole country should be uniform, such as the marriage law, the bankruptcy law, and so forth; but there are other matters in which it is immaterial whether the machinery is quite the same in this as in that part of the country. I venture to commend that to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. I will not pursue that. I may say, however, that we do base the claim for this Bill not only upon those general and, I believe, practical considerations to which I and other speakers on this side have adverted, but on the theory that Wales is entitled to particular legislation. When I say that, I wish to tell the House that Welsh particularism is in no sense inconsistent with the most thorough loyalty to the Crown and to the Empire. I defy anybody to cast one single stone against the conduct of the Welsh people during the trying time we have been passing through. We have had differences of opinion, but I can assure the House that there is no body of men more willing than the people of those thirteen counties to support the Empire if called upon to do so. There is a certain narrowness of view on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. I have had this out with him in connection with the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1899, when he refused the slightest amendment in favour of the Welsh counties. Notwithstanding that the unanimous Report of the Welsh Land Commission expressed the same sentiments as I, during the debates on that Bill, expressed, he was immovable, and I suppose he will be immovable on this occasion. There is a body of opinion rising up in Wales before which he will have to bow down.

MR. WALTER LONG: That is no argument in favour of the hon. Member's present contention.

*MR. BRYNMOR JONES: Why not proceed by steps? I say that our claim for particular legislation is justifiable, both historically and economically. What are the facts? After the lapse of six centuries, Welsh is still spoken habitually by nearly one million persons in the thirteen counties. It is the only one of the ancient tongues of this country which survives as a living language among a considerable body of our fellow subjects, while the descendants of the original people still maintain many of their national characteristics and preserve the consciousness of their national identity. These are the views on which I support this Bill.

(3.0.) LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): There is no one more in favour of devolution than I am, and I may say that I should not follow the Government of which I am a supporter if by any off chance their action was such as to prevent Wales from deriving the advantage of it. But with regard to the Bill before the House. I regret that on its merits I cannot support it. I have followed the speeches of hon. Members on both sides of the House, and in particular the speech made by the proposer of the Bill, which,

if I may be allowed to say so, I consider to contain the bulk of the arguments in favour of the measure. Therefore, in the remarks I propose to make, I shall offer some criticism chiefly of the case made by the hon. Member for Radnorshire.

This Bill has not come before Wales prominently. It is quite true, as was stated by the hon. Member for Radnorshire, that it has come before the County Councils in Wales, but in many cases—and I can speak of one case with authority—the Bill was not in the possession of the Members of the County Councils, and, therefore, they do not know what the proposals were when they were voting in favour of the Bill. But even assuming that members of the County Councils knew what the Bill contained, other authorities in Wales—the Urban District Councils, Municipal District Councils, Parish Councils, Boards of Guardians, and School Boards—knew absolutely nothing of them; and I say that before a Bill comes before the House of Commons containing such wide powers as are contained in this Bill, the various public bodies in Wales should be consulted in the matter. It has been said that the powers conferred by Clause 1 were included in the original Bill of 1888, but were dropped by the House of Commons of that day, in order not to overweight the measure. If the promoters of this Bill had confined themselves to those powers, they would have had a stronger case; but they have added other powers which were never dreamt of in 1888. Therefore, before the House of Commons can, in my opinion, assent to a Bill like this, it should remember that it declined in 1888 to confer the additional powers now proposed, and I say we are perfectly justified in opposing this Bill.

I am sorry to have to give my reasons for not entrusting County Councils in Wales with some of the powers that would be given to them if this Bill became law. My point is that the County Councils in Wales have not availed themselves of the powers they already possess, and until they have mastered primary and secondary education in local government, I say it would be unwise to trust them with higher and greater powers. The important sanitary powers proposed to be given to the County Councils have been mentioned in the course of this debate. I can assure the House that the sanitary powers already possessed by the County Councils in Wales are, at any rate so far as my own county is concerned, a dead letter. We have no medical officer of health. Although it is provided in the Local Government Act and in our Standing Orders that the various medical officers of health shall report quarterly to our meetings, I have been on the County Council for years, and I have never seen one of these reports brought forward. I could mention other instances in which Parish Councils have applied to a County Council for advice, and in which the County Council, instead of assisting them, merely begged the question. The County Councils in my opinion, have not exercised that authority which they ought to have exercised with reference to other bodies within their area. Again, when the County Councils came into existence in 1888, there was a provision that certain main roads then maintained by the urban authorities should still be maintained by them if they applied to the County Council for that purpose, but that if no application were made within three years, then the duty of maintenance would lapse to the County Councils. No such application having been made, the County Council now manages these roads in a particular town with which I am acquainted. What has been the result? The County Council has not done justice to the town to which I refer in regard to the upkeep of the main roads. There has been continuous war between the rural and urban districts with reference to the contribution which ought to be paid for the maintenance of main roads in towns, and the towns have suffered under great injustice because of the treatment meted out to them by the County Councils. The particular County Council to which I am referring has something like fifty-two members, all of whom, with the exception of twelve, represent rural districts, and even some of the urban representatives do not always vote as I should like to see them vote when it comes to a question of town against country. I give these instances to show

that it would be unsafe to entrust more authority to the County Councils in Wales.

Hon. Members cannot, perhaps, quite appreciate the difference between County Councils in England and those in Wales. Though I am in a minority on a County Council, and other bodies in Wales, and though I differ widely, and sometimes severely, from the majority, still we are always the best of friends in the House of Commons and elsewhere. My own County Council passes resolutions disestablishing the Church of England, advocating disendowment, prohibiting the liquor traffic without compensation, and, in fact, anything else which the majority wish to bring forward. A resolution, however, came from an adjoining county urging the Government to enable County Councils to contribute towards the cost of putting up rifle ranges, drill halls, etc., and my County Council was asked to agree to it. Hon. Members may not believe it, but my County Council was so narrow minded and bigoted that it actually refused to agree to that resolution, although I got up and pointed out that if the Council took the powers, it need not exercise them. It refused to agree to the resolution, and the only argument that was used was that it was a matter that ought to be paid for by the nation, as it was a national obligation. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: A very sensible County Council.] My hon. friend says a very sensible County Council, but I challenge that statement. If the protection of the country is not a legitimate expenditure for county ratepayers, provided that the nation has not decided that it shall be paid out of the National Exchequer, I would ask my hon. friend why should county ratepayers pay for police or for education? County ratepayers pay for police and for education, and why should they not also help Volunteers if they require financial assistance? I further maintain that it would be unwise to entrust the County Councils with greater powers which might enable them to inflict hardship and serious damage on small authorities within their areas. Already County Councils have power with reference to isolation hospitals, inebriate homes, and other matters. What has been done in Wales with reference to these powers? Nothing. County Councils have now power to join together for mutual purposes, and I differ from the hon. Member opposite that the reason why that power has not been exercised was that the County Councils could not afford the expense of acting jointly. But in Clause 81, Sub-section 6, power is given, if County Councils join together for purposes in which they have a right to be interested, not disestablishment, or disendowment, or anything of that kind, to pay the expenses out of a common fund. My friends in Wales have been under the impression that this Bill deals with water works and gas works. Many who support this Bill, although they have never seen it, think that when it becomes law they will be able to obtain power for the acquisition of water works and gas works much more cheaply than at present. The Bill would not affect that in the least. If it did, I should be the very first to give it my best attention, and if it had no drawbacks, I should vote for it with the greatest pleasure. My hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone referred to the Report of the Departmental Committee of 1898. I had not seen that Report before, but I quite agree with it. In that year the County Councils of England asked Parliament to delegate certain powers to them, and that request was reported on by the Committee. I would suggest to my hon. friends opposite that we should go back to that period, and refer this Bill to a similar Committee, which would consider whether these powers, many of which would be desirable, should be given to the County Councils after safeguarding the interests of minorities. I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who represents the Government on this question, to see that the interests of minorities, especially the smaller bodies, are duly safeguarded if he proposes to meet the proposals of this Bill half way. I have felt it my duty to oppose this Bill, though not because I do not believe in devolution. I am a thorough believer in devolution, and if I thought the Bill would do a good turn to Wales, I should not be afraid to vote for it.

*(3.22.) MR. VAUGHAN DAVIES (Cardiganshire): What puzzles me in connection with this Bill is that the foundation of all the speeches which have been delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite is a thorough approval of the groundwork of the measure, namely, devolution. We have not heard anything against the proposition that the County Councils in Wales ought to have greater powers than they possess at the present time. The chief objection of the hon. and gallant Member for South Glamorganshire to this Bill, as it seems to me, was that he had not been consulted by his constituents. He said his constituents had not consulted him. I assume that, on matters affecting them, it is our bounden duty to consult our constituents, as well as to wait for them to consult us. Directly I heard of this Bill I consulted the County Council of my county. I have had the pleasure of sitting on a County Council for many years, and I can say we have never dragged questions of politics or religion into our deliberations. On my County Council there are sixty-five members, fifty-eight of whom are Liberals; and only two years ago we elected to the position of chairman the gentleman who does me the honour to contest my seat upon every occasion. And, when appointing aldermen, we hand over a number of aldermen's seats on the County Council to the Tory Party to appoint whom they like. We never drag politics into questions of this kind. We know very well that the question of local government depends on money, and we are not going to drag in politics when we have rates and taxes to pay. I remember in the first two years of local government in Wales there was a good deal of Party feeling, but that is dead long ago. The reason why we Liberals are the dominant Party in Welsh County Councils is the same that we are the dominant Party in the House of Commons. I can say without doubt that all the County Councils throughout Wales act in that spirit.

The hon. and gallant Gentleman, in the course of his second objection to this Bill, took what he thought was a special point—the question of money; and on the question of money the sting of his objection came out. He said if these expenses were not watched they would hit the landlords. The hon. Gentleman forgot that half their rates are paid for them by the Tory Party. Wales had proved, upon the only two opportunities that she had, her capacity for self-government—the Education Act and the Sunday Closing Act. Both these measures had been handed over to Wales to carry out, and I defy hon. Members of this House to say these powers have been misused. I think we might be allowed to go into these questions for ourselves. I have been connected with all the public authorities in my county for the last thirty years, and I can speak with authority of the trouble they had to go through by having to appeal to the central body in London. They have been blocked in every way. The authorities in London admit that they cannot get through their work, and on more than one occasion I have received letters from them asking me privately to inform them what was the best thing to do with regard to particular matters connected with my county. I will give one illustration of the power of that ignorance of the London authority. They sent down an order that, wherever we held fairs throughout the county, the places where they were held must be well paved, watered, and cleansed. That was all very well in large towns, but when you come to small towns in the rural districts, where these fairs are held, it means that you are actually shutting out the whole of the agriculturists of the county from the opportunity of getting rid of their cattle at market prices. In my county we usually hold these fairs in a field just outside the towns, and we have had notice that that cannot be allowed in the future. What does that mean? If the small town is to carry out the order as it stands now, a heavy rate must be levied on the district, or else a special tax must be put on every horse or head of cattle that goes to the fair. One of the chief objects of agriculturists is to get the farmers to take their cattle to fairs, and not to private dealers at all. That is a great advantage to the farmers, because otherwise they get into the hands of the local dealers, and do not get the fair market

price; but now, if he takes his cattle to the market, he will have to pay certain dues. And what is the result? You will shut up all these fairs in the county, simply on the order of a body of men in London who do not understand local requirements. These are matters which local County Councils ought to be allowed to deal with, and not persons in London who do not understand the local conditions, and who lay down red tape laws that it is impossible for us to carry out.

*(3.34.) MR. JOSEPH LAWRENCE (Monmouth Boroughs): As this Bill deals with Monmouthshire as well as Wales, it might not be inappropriate for me, as a representative of Monmouth, to say a few words on this occasion. I listened with great pleasure and attention to the speech of the mover and seconder of the Bill, and if anything could reconcile some of us who sit upon this side of the House to the acceptance of the Bill that they have introduced, it would be the moderation and the seductiveness of the manner in which they brought it forward and put its claims before us. I have nothing to object to in the manner in which this Bill is introduced; but, while it looks such a simple measure, it contains within it the germs of principles which have in themselves a very mischievous tendency. What does this Bill propose to do? I would say parenthetically, with regard to its being hastily conceived, that we have an instance of that in the speech of the mover of the Second Reading when he was asked, when he was dilating on the advantage of the County Councils having the assistance of trained medical officers, how many medical officers they had. He could not tell. I might give many other instances of a lack of knowledge of Local Government displayed in the wording of the Bill. The powers which it proposes to transfer—powers which are now exercised by several Ministers of Government Departments, powers so far-reaching that they require six pages of closely printed matter in the shape of the Bill to enumerate them—I will not trouble the House by going over them again after the masterly manner in which they have been dealt with. I will only say that they are in many cases of the most serious nature, affecting the rights of property, and almost revolutionary in their character. I submit that a Bill of this far-reaching character ought not to be introduced without full and proper inquiry. Not the smallest atom of evidence has been adduced to show that the Government Departments have failed in their duty in any way; and, on the other hand, there is no demand of a local or popular character for the Bill. I have visited my constituency several times in the course of the present Parliament, and in no quarter have I heard any desire whatever expressed for this Bill. Indeed, I might go further, and say that so far from there being an almost unanimous support extended to this Bill by County Councils, as is suggested by various Members, the County Councils of Monmouthshire can hardly be said to have given an opinion in favour of it at all, because at the time they passed the resolution appointing the deputation they had not the Bill before them; and I believe I am justified in saying that a great number of the members of the Monmouth County Council refused to attend the deputation, because they knew nothing of the terms of the Bill. It had not been properly considered. Therefore, I think the hon. Member who introduced the Bill was dealing just a little unfairly with the House when he tried to influence its judgment by pointing to this great array of support. With regard to the Newport Town Council, it also passed a resolution in favour of a deputation, but at that time it had not the Bill before it, and the resolution, which was passed at the fag-end of a busy day, received the support of the Council without being debated or properly understood.

The second part of the Bill, comprising Clauses 2 and 5, is even more uncalled for. It proposes the establishment of a Joint Counties Board, and it takes power for the permissive transference to that Board of some of the powers at present exercised by seven Ministers or Departments of State. The duties of the Board are not confined or limited, whilst the financial machinery is of the most crude and ill-digested character. If the concerted action

boroughs they will act recklessly, or without control, it would be a simple matter to provide some control by the joint Boards of County Councils, when they are created. There are many other points which I might mention, but at this hour I should not be doing my duty if I further took up the time of the House. In conclusion, I wish to say that in spite of what has been said to the contrary, I contend that Wales is in favour of this Bill, and the County Councils are in favour of it, for they have passed resolutions expressing their approval of this measure.

*(4.5.) MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): This matter concerns the County Councils of England as well as those of Wales, and that is my excuse for intervening in this debate. This question has been in the air for a good many years, and we all remember that in the Bill of 1888 the Government proposed a clause transferring some of the very powers included in this Bill to County Councils. Objection was taken at that time that County Councils were only just being created, and that it was rather premature to transfer those powers; and the consequence was that the clause was altered and a Provisional Order substituted. In the following year the Local Government Board took action upon that clause, and introduced a schedule not unlike the one contained in this Bill. What has happened since then? Not only have County Councils been thoroughly well constituted and recognised as containing some of the most public-spirited and hard-working men in the counties, but under the Local Government Act of 1894 a very large number of new powers were put upon the shoulders of the Local Government Board. The consequence was foretold at the time, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton would not listen to us when we said that the Local Government Board would be overwhelmed with work. The right hon. Gentleman was then asked to do more in the way of devolving powers on the local authorities, but I think he listened too much to the permanent officials of the Local Government Board rather than to the wishes of hon. Members of the House. In a few years time the Local Government Board was so choked with work that there had to be a Departmental Committee appointed to see what could be done to relieve the Local Government Board.

The County Councils Association, which represents practically all the County Councils of England and Wales, put certain proposals before the Local Government Board, and they were very similar to the schedule of this Bill. This schedule was adopted by the Committee of the County Councils Association, and was put before the Local Government Board, not as a final scheme but as one simply for consideration. There was one clause which does not find its place in this Bill, providing that non-county boroughs should be able to choose whether they would go to the County Councils or direct to the Local Government Board. I have no doubt that if the matter had been pressed, urban districts would have been included in that clause. I want to point out that, while urban districts in certain parts of the country have raised objections to any extension of powers to County Councils on many of these matters, Parliament has already conferred on County Councils, in respect of rural districts, powers far more important than the powers contained in this Bill. I cannot help thinking that it would greatly relieve the Local Government Board, and it would do no harm to anybody concerned, if a large number of the minor powers contained in this schedule were conferred on all County Councils with respect to rural districts and rural parishes only.

Supposing a small town desires to water its own streets, it has to get the sanction of the Local Government Board. Suppose a small town desires the use of a steam whistle, it has to obtain the sanction of a Department in London. If a village desires the use of a room for a certain purpose, the authority controlling this matter is the President of the Local Government Board. Which is best—that these petty questions should be determined by men of position with local knowledge without any charge to the town, or that an inspector should be sent down from London at £3 3s. a day to settle the matter? Or there is another alternative, which is that of having these matters determined in Whitehall without any local knowledge or any inquiry whatever. It seems to me that upon the ground

of economy alone, many of these questions can be far better determined by the locality concerned. Under Section 16 of the Act of 1894 County Councils have the power, on the representation of the Parish Council, to order any Rural District Council to deal with roads, sewers, and to provide a water supply, and they can divest the Rural District Council of the powers given to it by law and themselves carry out these improvements. I instance these matters to show that at present very important powers are vested in the County Councils for final decision in respect of rural parishes, and there cannot be any objection whatever to transferring these powers except the mere official objection, which is inherent in some official minds, to give up power. There cannot be any real objection to trusting many of these petty powers in the hands of public bodies who already perform far more important work. Surely a schedule like this might be sent to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. The inquiries of the Departmental Committee appointed to consider these matters show conclusively that it is impossible to give County Councils these additional powers without a Provisional Order, and it is impossible to delegate these powers to one county and refuse them to another.

I do not see that Wales has a higher claim for devolution than Lancashire or the West Riding of Yorkshire. If you are to have devolution it is better to come gradually, and it is better to entrust it to really strong County Councils in the first place. It is perfectly true that many County Councils have not appointed a medical officer of health, and I have always said that that was a weak point in their armour. I hope the time will come when it will be compulsory upon every County Council to appoint a medical officer of health. The Local Government Board might well decline to entrust further sanitary powers to any County Councils which have not appointed a medical officer of health. But at any rate it should be made possible for the Local Government Board, under the Act of 1888, to introduce Provisional Orders to confer these powers upon any County Councils. I am sorry to trouble the House so long upon these questions, but I think this is one of the most important questions of the future. I think it is much better that this question of devolution should be dealt with gradually. I do not think that there is any deep-seated difference between Welsh and English County Councils, nor do I think that the provision establishing Joint County Boards is a very happy one, for, if they wish to combine for all purposes, they ought to combine by means of Provisional Orders. If they want to combine for special purposes, the machinery to do so already exists by way of joint committees. I hope the Government will favour some of these proposals to make devolution easier than it is under the present law, and that it may be possible to confer greater powers to deal with petty matters upon County Councils.

(4.18.) MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I think the speech of the hon. Member who has just addressed the House has been listened to with great attention on both sides, because of his experience in county government matters, and the suggestions he has thrown out have been singularly valuable. I trust that the Government will give them all due consideration. I was glad to hear his suggestion that the schedule of the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee for consideration, and I trust that the Government will be able to accept that idea. There is one remark I ought to make with reference to one thing that fell from the hon. Member. He said that the Welsh counties had no better claim than the English counties for devolution under this or any other Bill. There is absolutely no good reason why there should not be a Bill covering the whole country, but the difference is that this is a purely practical Bill. The non-county boroughs and the District Councils have been exceedingly hostile in England on the subject; but although this Bill has been before the Welsh Councils for three years, there has not been a single resolution of any Urban Council or Town Council in opposition to the Bill. The two most important non county boroughs in North Wales are represented by the hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs, whose name is on the Bill. The second most important are represented by myself If the hon. Member could say the same

suggested by these clauses is really desired, I submit that the Local Government Act, 1888, suffices for all practical purposes.

On the point of the public support of the Bill, I would like to cite one of the most, if not the most, respected organs of public opinion in the Principality—The *Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers' Gazette* of March 28th. A writer in that paper, speaking of this Bill, says—

"There are thousands of people who think this measure has some sort of merit, while, as a matter of fact, it has not a single just claim to a moment's consideration."

Later on, the same writer says—

"I have written very plainly about this Bill, but I have not received a single word of defence on its behalf. It is not capable of being defended. I believe that under the Act of 1888 great things might have been done for Wales, and I think it is to the lasting disgrace of the County Councils that those powers have remained unused for fourteen years."

This article is headed "A Silly Bill," and it concludes with some very disparaging remarks about hon. Members opposite, which I know the Rules of the House would not permit me to read.

Let me briefly allude to one or two other features of the Bill. Clause 6 reads—

"For the purposes of this Act, Monmouthshire shall be deemed to be in Wales."

Monmouth, after all, is still an English county, as it has been for nearly four centuries. The people of Monmouthshire, and of the town of Monmouth in particular, strongly object to these attempts to include the county in the Principality. That may be their prejudice, and it may be unwise on their part, but it is the fact, and, as their representative, it is my duty fearlessly to state it in this House. They have successfully resisted, in the past, the inclusion of Monmouth in Welsh Bills, notably in the case of Welsh Sunday Closing. They particularly object to being included in this Bill, and having stamped out, as they consider, whatever little bit of independence and liberty they now possess.

If there can be proved on sound business grounds a necessity for legislation of this kind, it should be introduced by the responsible Government of the day. Much has been said, especially by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, on the subject of devolution. But it occurs to me that, whilst the majority of us are in favour of delegating to local bodies some of the powers now exercised by the central authority, it is just possible that the good cause of devolution may be prejudiced and injured by hasty and ill-considered legislation of this kind. If such measures are to be carried, and to be of lasting benefit to the country, they should be drafted and framed by the Government of the day, because then the localities in question, especially in rural districts and boroughs like Monmouth and Newport, would have a guarantee that some consideration would be shown to the rights of minorities. If it was considered to be a part of the proper duties of the Imperial Government to introduce a Bill dealing with the constitution of parish councils, surely a Bill having such far-reaching aims as the measure now before the House is one which ought to come within the purview of the functions of the Government. My constituents feel that this Bill is but the thin end of the wedge of demands in the future for the devolution of many other functions. Whatever the present or ultimate aims of the authors of this Bill may be, it will be admitted that a measure involving the possibility of a grave constitutional change should not be passed by the House of Commons without an opportunity being afforded to the country of fully considering the issues involved. For that reason, I join heartily in supporting the rejection of the Bill.

*(3.50.) MR. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.): I do not think anyone can say the County Councils of Wales have not justified their existence. In spite of the remarks of hon. Gentlemen opposite, I think they have discharged their duties efficiently, economically, and well. Judging from the debate of today, it appears as though many Members consider the proposal made in this Bill to be a great innovation. Those Members cannot have studied the Act of 1888 with any care, because in Section 10 of that Act there is contemplated the very process with regard to the devolution of powers to County Councils suggested by this Bill. Not only so, but in the year 1889 an attempt was made to carry out that idea by a Provisional Order brought

in by the Local Government Board, and, if I understand the matter correctly, that Provisional Order was not confirmed, because of the strenuous opposition, mainly in England, of the non-county boroughs.

What is the situation today in Wales? Notwithstanding the statements of the hon. Members for Newport and Montgomery Boroughs, I say there is practical unanimity throughout the length and breadth of Wales in favour of this Bill. Where the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire can have been, I do not know; but I have certainly discovered in my own constituency a great and burning demand for this Bill. I need only say that twelve out of sixteen County Councils have passed resolutions approving of this Bill. It has been said that this Bill was not before the County Councils when the resolution was passed in favour of it, but surely those who make that statement speak in ignorance, because in 1900 there was a conference of all the County Councils in Wales, and the Lord Lieutenant of Carnarvonshire, who so admirably presented the case for this Bill to the President of the Local Government Board yesterday, was present. That conference took into consideration all the points mentioned in the schedule to this Bill, and all the matters which it is proposed to transfer to the County Councils were taken into consideration. The County Councils at that conference unanimously expressed their opinion in favour of the transfer of these powers to the County Councils. Therefore, when my hon. friend says that this Bill was not before the County Councils when they considered the matters recently, he must not forget the fact that the Bill proposed to do what the joint conference of County Councils approved of two years ago. and it is idle to say that this question has been sprung upon the County Councils, and that they have been passing resolutions blindly. It is not very creditable to the constituencies of the hon. Gentleman and my hon. and gallant friend opposite when they say that these County Councils have been passing resolutions without knowing what the Bill contemplated.

In Wales we are in a somewhat different position from England. I agree with what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife said with regard to devolution, and about Wales being entitled to different treatment. Our circumstances and our people are different, and we have already had separate treatment; and if the wishes of the people are to be considered at all in regard to these matters, we are still entitled to separate treatment. The great difference as compared with England is that all the county boroughs, as well as the County Councils, of Wales are in favour of this Bill. The county boroughs, I think, were represented yesterday on the deputation to the President of the Local Government Board. Now, what are the objections which have been raised to this Bill? It is said that this measure will create additional expense. I am not so sure that additional expense will be incurred. The County Councils are quite accustomed under the provisions of the Local Government Act of 1888 to holding inquiries and dealing with all the matters which arise under that section, and they have been granting powers to urban districts. The proposal to entrust County Councils with the duty of granting urban powers to rural districts seemed to stagger the hon. Member for Plymouth, but I would remind him that the County Councils already have powers to make rural into urban districts, and by doing so those districts *ipso facto* get urban powers under the Public Health Act of 1875. Therefore, some of these provisions are not really new to the County Council, but what this Bill proposes is to give them directly the powers which exist under the Public Health Act of 1875. By a combination of five or more County Councils, the expense need not be any larger than it is today. The right hon. Member opposite says that by giving these powers to the County Councils you are making them the judge of their own case, and there will be no one to control them. Under Section 10 of the Act, the Local Government Board will still have some power in this respect; but surely this is a matter contemplated by the Act of 1888, and intended to be carried out in 1889, and the same argument would apply then as now. If my right hon. friend is afraid that when these powers are granted to county

thing with regard to England, there would be absolutely no difficulty at all in getting a Bill to cover the whole country. Yorkshire and Lancashire endeavoured to get such a Bill. The hon. Member will see that we are not putting this claim on national grounds but on the practical grounds of the convenience that it ought to be carried as far as Wales is concerned, where the experiment will have a fair trial, because there is no opposition causing friction from the non-county boroughs to contend with. I fail to see the difference between hon. Members who support and those who oppose the Bill. I have listened very carefully to the whole debate, and so far as the principle is concerned, it is adopted by hon. Members who oppose the Bill. The hon. Member for South Glamorgan said he was in favour of a considerable measure of devolution; and he went further than that, and adopted in substance what is contained in the Bill.

MAJOR WYNDHAM-QUIN: I have no objection to devolution for the whole country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. and gallant Member's objection to devolution is not an objection at all apart from the limitation to Wales. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] As far as I can understand from the hon. Member, he has no objection in the main to the devolution to County Councils of the questions referred to in this Bill. His objection is, that the Bill is limited to the Welsh counties. It is not large and revolutionary enough for him. Now, we are a little bit more modest. We want to start in a small way, and if it is a success in Wales, what will be the result? I have not the faintest doubt that the English non-county boroughs will see that it works so well there that their objections were not well grounded, and they will wish to see it extended to their own counties. The hon. Member opposite said he was in favour of provincial councils. He did not object at all to the cutting of the country up into provinces. He would have a provincial council for Wales. I think I am quoting him fairly. He objects to the powers here, because

of economy alone, many of these questions can be far better determined by the locality concerned. Under Section 16 of the Act of 1894 County Councils have the power, on the representation of the Parish Council, to order any Rural District Council to deal with roads, sewers, and to provide a water supply, and they can divest the Rural District Council of the powers given to it by law and themselves carry out these improvements. I instance these matters to show that at present very important powers are vested in the County Councils for final decision in respect of rural parishes, and there cannot be any objection whatever to transferring these powers except the mere official objection, which is inherent in some official minds, to give up power. There cannot be any real objection to trusting many of these petty powers in the hands of public bodies who already perform far more important work. Surely a schedule like this might be sent to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. The inquiries of the Departmental Committee appointed to consider these matters show conclusively that it is impossible to give County Councils these additional powers without a Provisional Order, and it is impossible to delegate these powers to one county and refuse them to another.

I do not see that Wales has a higher claim for devolution than Lancashire or the West Riding of Yorkshire. If you are to have devolution it is better to come gradually, and it is better to entrust it to really strong County Councils in the first place. It is perfectly true that many County Councils have not appointed a medical officer of health, and I have always said that that was a weak point in their armour. I hope the time will come when it will be compulsory upon every County Council to appoint a medical officer of health. The Local Government Board might well decline to entrust further sanitary powers to any County Councils which have not appointed a medical officer of health. But at any rate it should be made possible for the Local Government Board, under the Act of 1888, to introduce Provisional Orders to confer these powers upon any County Councils. I am sorry to trouble the House so long upon these questions, but I think this is one of the most important questions of the future. I think it is much better that this question of devolution should be dealt with gradually. I do not think that there is any deep-seated difference between Welsh and English County Councils, nor do I think that the provision establishing Joint County Boards is a very happy one, for, if they wish to combine for all purposes, they ought to combine by means of Provisional Orders. If they want to combine for special purposes, the machinery to do so already exists by way of joint committees. I hope the Government will favour some of these proposals to make devolution easier than it is under the present law, and that it may be possible to confer greater powers to deal with petty matters upon County Councils.

(4.18.) MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I think the speech of the hon. Member who has just addressed the House has been listened to with great attention on both sides, because of his experience in county government matters, and the suggestions he has thrown out have been singularly valuable. I trust that the Government will give them all due consideration. I was glad to hear his suggestion that the schedule of the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee for consideration, and I trust that the Government will be able to accept that idea. There is one remark I ought to make with reference to one thing that fell from the hon. Member. He said that the Welsh counties had no better claim than the English counties for devolution under this or any other Bill. There is absolutely no good reason why there should not be a Bill covering the whole country, but the difference is that this is a purely practical Bill. The non-county boroughs and the District Councils have been exceedingly hostile in England on the subject; but although this Bill has been before the Welsh Councils for three years, there has not been a single resolution of any Urban Council or Town Council in opposition to the Bill. The two most important non county boroughs in North Wales are represented by the hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs, whose name is on the Bill. The second most important are represented by myself If the hon. Member could say the same

well now, I would complain of it. Even if the experts were the best in the world, I would challenge the present system. Even if they did the work expeditiously, which nobody could say they did, I say it is better for the sake of the country that it should be devolved on the class of men who know the locality itself. It is true that for the moment the Welsh County Councils happen to be Liberal. Is that really a reason for disfranchising us. I do not think the hon. and gallant Member has been worthy of the charity and kindness of his disposition in suggesting that that is a good reason, and I think on the whole he will be ashamed of the argument he has used. Let a strangers go into any of these county councils when business is on, and I defy him to be able to te l whether it is a Liberal or Conservative Council. The County Councils conduct themselves from a purely business point of view in going through their agendas. Afterwards controversial matters may be discussed, but only in an abstract manner. The hon. Member for Montgomery Boroughs in his lucid speech against this Bill said that the County Councils occasionally passed abstract resolutions. How often? I daresay the Montgomeryshire County Council has passed one or two such resolutions in the course of its career, but I do not recollect more than two or three being passed by the County Council of which I was a member for several years. You must allow the County Council to let off steam now and again, and I think you will find that it rather improves their temper and that less partisanship is afterwards displayed. Let me take the question which has been raised with reference to aldermen. I do not know a single Welsh County Council that has taken advantage of a party majority to elect the whole of its aldermen from the party of the majority. On the contrary, what happens is this. The consider carefully the proportion of councillors belonging to each party and elect the same proportion of aldermen. I want to know how many English Councils which happen to be in the hands of Conservatives or even of Liberals, have done that. I have seen officers appointed, but I have never seen any political influence at work at all in connection with the appointments. In my own county, a Conservative was appointed county surveyor and it was purely a question of getting the best man.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PRYCE-JONES: The Denbighshire County Conncil had to appoint representatives for a certain body with reference to intermediate education, and they appointed all Radicals. Of course, they would not have me.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I admit it may be an objection to the Bill that the hon. Member was not appointed to a particular committee of the Denbighshire County Council, and I very much regret it. On these committees, however, it will be found that political considerations do not enter at all. The selection is purely non-partisan. I would really ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will not consent to make this experiment with regard to Wales. It may be said that the scheme is not embodied in the Bill but it is a scheme which cannot come into operation except by the consent of the County Councils themselves. It is very difficult to get work out of the hands of permanent officials. Even the officials of a Government Department are very human. They naturally think that their work is done better than it could be done by anyone else, but at the same time they lack local knowledge, local sympathy, and acquaintance with local prejudices. I would appeal to the President of the Local Government Board to give favourable consideration to this Bill, and, if possible, consent to its being referred to a Select Committee.

(4.45.) Mr. WALTER LONG: I will take up only a very few minutes of the time of the House in saying what I have to say on behalf of the Government and the Department with which I am connected with reference to this Bill. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has not, I think, quite accurately described the suggestion of my hon. friend the Member for East Somerset. My hon. friend is well known to the House for his very full and

accurate knowledge of County Government work, and in his very able speech he suggested that something in the form of the schedule to this Bill might very well be incorporated in a Provisional Order and referred to a Select Committee; but I did not understand him to suggest that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee involving its being read a second time by the House of Commons. The hon. Gentleman also fell into another error. He suggested that the opposition to this Bill proceeds from the permanent officials of a Government Department, who would be unwilling naturally to surrender the powers they possess at the present time. I do not think there is any foundation for that view. Permanent officials are not more desirous of retaining in their hands powers they can properly surrender than are Members of Parliament. If devolution can be satisfactorily carried out, I am convinced that no opposition will be offered to it on behalf of the officials of any Government Department. The truth is, that to discuss devolution as a theory and to apply it as a practice are two very different things. We have heard a great deal more during the debate of the theory of devolution than of its practical application: but I am only going to say a very few words, both about the theory and also the attempt to practically apply it under this Bill. Every hon. Member who has spoken has been at pains to declare that he is entirely in favour of devolution. Perhaps I may without offence or egotism say that before devolution had as many advocates as it now has, my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, and myself, advocated and worked for devolution upon local authorities. There is no difference of opinion as to the desirability of relieving this House and Government Departments of work which can be as well done by local authority; but the difficulty is to find a method of transfer. The theory of devolution has found advocates in all quarters of the House today, and the House has been told that the whole difficulty in the way of devolution is the non-county boroughs. That is only part of the question. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, and the hon. Member who seconded the Motion, said it was only by a mistake that Clause 1 did not apply to county boroughs as well as to County Councils; but the moment we attempt, in the process of devolution, to include county boroughs, we at once find ourselves confronted by a difficulty quite distinct from that which exists in regard to non-county boroughs. In regard to non-county boroughs and the large urban districts, the difficulty is one of jealousy as regards control by an authority, which they often consider not to be a suitable authority, to be placed over themselves. The difficulty with regard to the county boroughs is a totally different one. What is the duty which a Government Department has to perform in nine cases out of ten? It either is, as my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth said in his most excellent speech, to act as the appellate authority, to which an individual or a minority may appeal for protection against what may be considered an injustice, or else the equally important and at the same time more difficult duty of compelling the local authority to act, or to act itself in default of the local authority acting.

What is the practical suggestion made in this Bill, and what are the arguments that are advanced in favour of it? The House is asked, as a practical step in the direction of devolution, to invest a local authority, like the corporation of a big borough, with power to act in default of themselves, to make them the appellate authority against themselves, and to make them the authority who will have to compel them to act when they are unwilling to act. I ask the House, is that not a practical difficulty, and yet we have been told, very naturally so. by the representatives of county boroughs, that unless Clause 1 be so altered as to include county boroughs, their support of the Bill will not be forthcoming. Yet in all the able and interesting speeches to which we have listened, no attempt has been made to deal practically with this difficulty. I want to say one word about a remark which fell from my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth, because I think it was misunderstood by the House. My hon. friend objected to the general transfer

of these wide powers from a Government Department to County Councils which were not altogether free from some suggestion of corruption or maladministration. That remark was resented as being altogether unjust, but it is a well-known fact that allegations have been made from time to time as to maladministration and improper administration on behalf of municipal authorities. I was rather surprised to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite fall foul of my hon. friend for that statement, because only the other day, when we were debating the London Water Bill, for which I am responsible, half a dozen hon. Gentlemen opposite flung similar charges across the floor of the House against the old Metropolitan Board of Works. [Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That was not a municipal body.] I will come to that presently, but I maintain that my hon. friend was fully justified in making the limited statement he did, and I think hon. Gentlemen misunderstood him when they affected to think that he had made a general charge of corruption against the municipal bodies in this country. I am sure that the view we all entertain is that our municipal bodies have on the whole done their work admirably, and have been actuated by the highest possible motive; and that even where they have been imprudent or extravagant, it was not because they desired to spend money for the sake of spending it, but because they had acted with too little knowledge and experience, or had, perhaps, been a little too ready to experiment with other people's money. But on the whole they have done good work and have done it well, and I heartily reciprocate everything that has been said in the course of this debate with reference to County Councils, whether they be in England or in Wales. As regards County Councils in Wales, I have never heard of any kind of oppression of minorities because of diffences of political feeling. I believe that local government, whether in our towns or in the country districts, has been honestly and well carried out, and that view is shared by my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth, and is not in any way weakened by the remark he made.

We have heard today a great deal about devolution, but we have had no practical evidence that the difficulties now existing would be removed in case a change in the law were made. In my opinion, with certain reservations, the devolution of many of the powers now exercised by Government Departments would be very advantageous. An hon. Member introduced *pour rire* an instance of a steam whistle. It is not the Government Department that would be asked to sanction the use of a steam whistle, but the local authority, but the Government Department would be appealed to by people who thought that improper use was being made of the steam whistle. It sounded, no doubt, rather a ridiculous thing, but hon. Members who live in large manufacturing towns know very well that life would be made unbearable by the improper use of steam whistles. Speaking for my Department, so far as devolution has found expression in the Provisional Orders issued by my right hon. friend, to devolution on the County Councils of certain powers with the consent of the Government Departments concerned I would offer no opposition. At the same time I think my hon. friend the Member for East Somerset was right when he told the House that under Section 10 of the Act of 1888, we have every power to devolve generally but not individually. I think a change in the law might very well be made in that direction, and I should be very glad to receive powers to devolve certain powers individually, and not generally, but it is necessary that we should insist on this being done under Section 10 of the Act of 1888, and not under Clause 1 of this Bill. Section 10 gave the Local Government Board power to devolve by Provisional Order with the consent of the Department. The only difficulty is that the transfer must be made generally, and not individually, and I will offer no objection to such an alteration in the law; but I cannot on behalf of the Government accept the change suggested in this Bill. The whole debate has practically turned on the devolution of these powers on County Councils.

We have heard very little about Part II. of the Bill. I confess I listened to

Walter Long.

the suggestions in Part. II with profound astonishment The hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Metropolitan Board of Works was not a municipal body, meaning, of course, that it was a body selected by indirect election. But Part II. of this Bill proposes indirect election, and Parliament is asked to give sanction to a body elected on a system on which so much ridicule was poured the other day in connection with the constitution of the proposed Water Board for London. In Part II. we are not told what the election is to be, and we are told nothing about the scheme, although the body to be elected under the scheme is to have rating powers over the area concerned. I would ask the House what is the necessity for a Joint County Board either in Wales or anywhere else? Under the Act of 1888 counties jointly interested, can form a joint committee and do the work themselves. I was told yesterday by a deputation that such a Committee can deal with homes for inebriates and similar matters, and, so far as I have been able to ascertain there is nothing to prevent counties jointly interested in the provision of a home for inebraites providing it. But surely the House cannot be seriously asked for the first time to set up an association of County Councils without any definite power or any clear idea how they are to be elected or what they are to do beyond the slender ground that if they are appointed they may provide a joint home for inebriates. We ought to have more information as to what work this Joint Board is to be able to carry out which the County Councils cannot carry out now, in Wales or elsewhere. The only information which I have been able to ascertain is derived from a correspondence between my Department and gentlemen from Wales in 1892. I do not know whether the suggestions then made still hold good, but if they did still hold good, I should have a great deal to say in criticism of them. If they do not still hold good, then I submit to the House that we are in complete ignorance as to what this new Joint Board would do, that we know nothing as to its constitution, and that we would not be justified in making such a great change in the law of local government to enable five councils or more to do work which can be done by the existing County Councils.

To devolution itself, in theory, I offer no objection. Everyone is in favour of it, but it is only when people attempt to give effect to their ideas that they find difficulties in their path. Hon. Gentlemen have not attempted to deal with the practical question put to them, namely, the difficulty of making one authority alike the defendant and the judge. When it is proposed to give County Councils fresh powers, and to add to their dignity and importance, I wish to know what is the opinion of the urban districts who would be governed by these Councils. The hon. Gentleman who spoke just now said that notwithstanding the fact that these proposals were for something like three years before the people of Wales, no expression of opposition had come from the urban districts. But the hon. Member will remember, as I do, that it was not until it was brought home to the local authorities what the control or interference of the County Council would really mean, that opposition arose; and my belief is, that if it were not thought that this debate was merely academic, and that if it were really believed that the Bill were going to pass into law, a great deal would be said against it by the urban districts. The argument is a very simple one. These urban communities would take up the position of saying—"We have urban needs and difficulties; the County Councils are largely formed of county or agricultural members, who do not appreciate the difficulties of the towns, and we would rather have a separate Department in London than a body which can but have little experience of what we want." One other point has been dealt with lightly, and treated as if it were of no importance at all, namely, the provision of a proper staff of experts and the cost. In regard to some of the powers in the schedule, they could only be exercised by a Government Department, provided with the very best expert assistance. We have the advantage in our Medical Department, our Surveyors and Engineering

of these wide powers from a Government Department to County Councils which were not altogether free from some suggestion of corruption or maladministration. That remark was resented as being altogether unjust, but it is a well-known fact that allegations have been made from time to time as to maladministration and improper administration on behalf of municipal authorities. I was rather surprised to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite fall foul of my hon. friend for that statement, because only the other day, when we were debating the London Water Bill, for which I am responsible, half a dozen hon. Gentlemen opposite flung similar charges across the floor of the House against the old Metropolitan Board of Works. [Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That was not a municipal body.] I will come to that presently, but I maintain that my hon. friend was fully justified in making the limited statement he did, and I think hon. Gentlemen misunderstood him when they affected to think that he had made a general charge of corruption against the municipal bodies in this country. I am sure that the view we all entertain is that our municipal bodies have on the whole done their work admirably, and have been actuated by the highest possible motive; and that even where they have been imprudent or extravagant, it was not because they desired to spend money for the sake of spending it, but because they had acted with too little knowledge and experience, or had, perhaps, been a little too ready to experiment with other people's money. But on the whole they have done good work and have done it well, and I heartily reciprocate everything that has been said in the course of this debate with reference to County Councils, whether they be in England or in Wales. As regards County Councils in Wales, I have never heard of any kind of oppression of minorities because of diffences of political feeling. I believe that local government, whether in our towns or in the country districts, has been honestly and well carried out, and that view is shared by my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth, and is not in any way weakened by the remark he made.

We have heard today a great deal about devolution, but we have had no practical evidence that the difficulties now existing would be removed in case a change in the law were made. In my opinion, with certain reservations, the devolution of many of the powers now exercised by Government Departments would be very advantageous. An hon. Member introduced *pour rire* an instance of a steam whistle. It is not the Government Department that would be asked to sanction the use of a steam whistle, but the local authority, but the Government Department would be appealed to by people who thought that improper use was being made of the steam whistle. It sounded, no doubt, rather a ridiculous thing, but hon. Members who live in large manufacturing towns know very well that life would be made unbearable by the improper use of steam whistles. Speaking for my Department, so far as devolution has found expression in the Provisional Orders issued by my right hon. friend, to devolution on the County Councils of certain powers with the consent of the Government Departments concerned I would offer no opposition. At the same time I think my hon. friend the Member for East Somerset was right when he told the House that under Section 10 of the Act of 1888, we have every power to devolve generally but not individually. I think a change in the law might very well be made in that direction, and I should be very glad to receive powers to devolve certain powers individually, and not generally, but it is necessary that we should insist on this being done under Section 10 of the Act of 1888, and not under Clause 1 of this Bill. Section 10 gave the Local Government Board power to devolve by Provisional Order with the consent of the Department. The only difficulty is that the transfer must be made generally, and not individually, and I will offer no objection to such an alteration in the law; but I cannot on behalf of the Government accept the change suggested in this Bill. The whole debate has practically turned on the devolution of these powers on County Councils.

We have heard very little about Part II. of the Bill. I confess I listened to

the suggestions in Part. II with profound astonishment. The hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Metropolitan Board of Works was not a municipal body, meaning, of course, that it was a body selected by indirect election. But Part II. of this Bill proposes indirect election, and Parliament is asked to give sanction to a body elected on a system on which so much ridicule was poured the other day in connection with the constitution of the proposed Water Board for London. In Part II. we are not told what the election is to be, and we are told nothing about the scheme, although the body to be elected under the scheme is to have rating powers over the area concerned. I would ask the House what is the necessity for a Joint County Board either in Wales or anywhere else? Under the Act of 1888 counties jointly interested, can form a joint committee and do the work themselves. I was told yesterday by a deputation that such a Committee can deal with homes for inebriates and similar matters, and, so far as I have been able to ascertain there is nothing to prevent counties jointly interested in the provision of a home for inebraites providing it. But surely the House cannot be seriously asked for the first time to set up an association of County Councils without any definite power or any clear idea how they are to be elected or what they are to do beyond the slender ground that if they are appointed they may provide a joint home for inebriates. We ought to have more information as to what work this Joint Board is to be able to carry out which the County Councils cannot carry out now, in Wales or elsewhere. The only information which I have been able to ascertain is derived from a correspondence between my Department and gentlemen from Wales in 1892. I do not know whether the suggestions then made still hold good, but if they did still hold good, I should have a great deal to say in criticism of them. If they do not still hold good, then I submit to the House that we are in complete ignorance as to what this new Joint Board would do, that we know nothing as to its constitution, and that we would not be justified in making such a great change in the law of local government to enable five councils or more to do work which can be done by the existing County Councils.

To devolution itself, in theory, I offer no objection. Everyone is in favour of it, but it is only when people attempt to give effect to their ideas that they find difficulties in their path. Hon. Gentlemen have not attempted to deal with the practical question put to them, namely, the difficulty of making one authority alike the defendant and the judge. When it is proposed to give County Councils fresh powers, and to add to their dignity and importance, I wish to know what is the opinion of the urban districts who would be governed by these Councils. The hon. Gentleman who spoke just now said that notwithstanding the fact that these proposals were for something like three years before the people of Wales, no expression of opposition had come from the urban districts. But the hon. Member will remember, as I do, that it was not until it was brought home to the local authorities what the control or interference of the County Council would really mean, that opposition arose; and my belief is, that if it were not thought that this debate was merely academic, and that if it were really believed that the Bill were going to pass into law, a great deal would be said against it by the urban districts. The argument is a very simple one. These urban communities would take up the position of saying—"We have urban needs and difficulties; the County Councils are largely formed of county or agricultural members, who do not appreciate the difficulties of the towns, and we would rather have a separate Department in London than a body which can but have little experience of what we want." One other point has been dealt with lightly, and treated as if it were of no importance at all, namely, the provision of a proper staff of experts and the cost. In regard to some of the powers in the schedule, they could only be exercised by a Government Department, provided with the very best expert assistance. We have the advantage in our Medical Department, our Surveyors and Engineering

Department, and our Architect Department, of men who have worked under and for the local authorities, and who have technical and expert knowledge of the highest possible kind. Let the County Councils understand, if they have seriously made up their minds to take these powers from the central department, that, whereas the cost relating to them is now being paid by the Government, it would in future fall upon the local authorities. I doubt very much whether many County Councils, when they find that they will have to employ an expert staff and pay it, will relish this considerable addition to their dignity and power. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife ridiculed those who said that they were in favour of devolution, but were yet unwilling to give practical effect to it. I deny altogether that there is any justification for the right hon. Gentleman's position. He is not entitled to say that we are not in favour of devolution because we vote against this particular form of it. The difficulty of giving effect to the theory is almost insuperable except with regard to powers which are thoroughly worth transfering. Holding these views, and believing also that the Bill is open to much greater criticism, I find it impossible to accept the suggestion that we should support the Second Reading or consent to send the Bill to a Select Committee. I shall, without hesitation, support the Amendment of my hon. friend.

(5.10.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I have listened to the whole of this very able debate, and I have been endeavouring to discover what are the real objections to this Bill. I thought I should have learned them from the right hon. Gentleman with all his great authority and experience, but I am still unable to discover them. The arguments in favour of the general principle of the Bill were stated early in the debate by my right hon. friend the Member for East Fife with his usual remarkable ability, and I will therefore not enter on a discussion of the general merits of devolution. The right hon. Gentleman objected to a remark of my right hon. friend that the people who declared themselves to be in favour of devolution in general were against it in practice. I must say that I think that the right hon. Gentleman himself has given a remarkable example of the truth of that remark. How does this proposal differ in fact from the proposal of his own Government in 1888? In my opinion there is no difference.

MR. WALTER LONG: More than half of the powers in the schedule of the present Bill were not contained in the Government Bill at all.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I understood from the hon. Member for East Somerset that the schedule to this Bill followed almost exactly that proposed by the County Council Association, which cannot be such a very malignant proposition. Besides, I entirely deny that the Bill depends on the particulars contained in the schedule. The right hon. Gentleman might have argued that some of the particulars ought not to be in the schedule, but that is entirely a question of detail, and has nothing whatever to do with the question of the Second Reading of the Bill. Therefore,

I affirm that this Bill in principle, and in its main details, is in point of fact the sort of legislation which was proposed by the Government in 1888. We have heard most instructive speeches in favour of the Bill from Gentlemen who are not representatives of Wales. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, who has been an able member of the Local Government Board, has pointed out that a powerful Committee was appointed in 1898 to consider this matter, and that the only reason they did not recommend the adoption of, practically speaking, the principles of this Bill was the opposition of the non-county boroughs. But what evidence is there to countervail the assertion of the Welsh Members that the county boroughs are not opposed to it in Wales? The right hon. Gentleman surmises that there may be such opposition, but I venture to think that the representatives of Wales know more about that than he can possibly do. So far as that goes it appears to me that the main foundation of his opposition to this proposal is condemned by the action of his own Government in 1888 and 1889. All he says is that there are things in this schedule which were not in the Provisional Order of 1889. If that is so, they can be struck out in Committee. That is not an argument against the Second Reading of the Bill.

What is the situation of Wales with regard to this matter? As everybody will admit, Wales is a country with wants, habits, and customs of its own. It therefore requires what may be called local treatment perhaps more than other parts of the United Kingdom. Why in the world should not the Welsh people administer those affairs quite as well as or even better than the experts of the Local Government Board? Where is the opposition to the Bill? In this question of devolution you have to consider the feeling of the community, and to regard the possibility of bringing the local action of the community to bear upon their own interests. In Wales the sentiment of the community is practically unanimous in favour of this Bill. Is that denied? The hon. Member for the Montgomery Boroughs opposed the Second Reading, but from the concluding portion of his speech I gathered that he was half-disposed to vote for it. That is not at all a characteristic of Welsh opposition. I hope our opposition does not usually end with a conclusion of that sort. Then the Member for Newport is opposed to the Bill. He rather disavows the Welsh character of Monmouthshire, but he, at all events, is speaking contrary to the opinion of his own County Council. That is really the character of the opposition to the Bill. You have here a considerable community with interests of its own—people who are anxious for a delegation of these powers. You have the fact that a Conservative Government made proposals practically identical with these, which were suspended for a time on the ground of an opposition which does not exist in Wales. You have the strong support of the hon. Member for East Somersetshire, who represents the opinion of English Councils on this matter. In my opinion, you have, therefore, the strongest body of evidence you possibly could have affirming the principle of this Bill.

Then I come to the second part of the Bill, to which the right hon. Gentleman objects. He asks what possible advantage could be obtained by this authorised combination of counties. The

advantage is perfectly obvious. You could have a joint staff, and it would be an advantage in many ways. If objection is taken to the operation of the Joint Board, that again is a question for Committee. The Bill proposes to give to the Welsh people power to do what they are perfectly competent to do with a better knowledge than any central authority can possibly have, and it would relieve a Department which is confessedly over-charged. As I said at the beginning, I have listened to this debate, but I am unable to find in the arguments against the Bill any reason for refusing it a Second Reading, and certainly I shall give it my sincere support.

(5.21) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 163; Noes, 201. (Division List No. 115.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-

Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)

Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William

Edwards, Frank
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)

Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher

Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kitson, Sir James

Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David

Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John

Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James, Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)

Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John

Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reed, Sir Edw. James (Cardiff)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.

Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal

Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips

Ure, Alexander

Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—

Mr. Brynmor Jones and

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther, H. T.
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Butcher, John George

Campbell, Rt Hn J. A. (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampten
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.

Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fr'd Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart

Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W

Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D. (W'dnesbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert

Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.)
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, F'versham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil

Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)

Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Knowles, Lees

Laurie, Lieut.-General

Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H (D'mfriesshire
Middlemore, J'hn Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh,
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Grav C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry

Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbert Pike (D'rlington

Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert

Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwcih)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier

Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter

Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty

Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield

Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Whiteley, H. (Ashtonund, Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander

Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Colonel Wyndham-Quin and Mr. Guest.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

MEAT MARKING (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

SAVINGS BANKS FUNDS COMMITTEE.

Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Andrew Agnew, Mr. Banbury, Mr. Bartley, Mr. John Campbell, Mr. Edmund Faber, Mr. Garfit, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Mr. Holland, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Warr, and Sir James Woodhouse nominated Members of the Committee on Savings Banks Funds.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 144.]

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Fourth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 17th April, 1902.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

Middlesex County Council Tramways.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

ISLINGTON AND EUSTON RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

Petition for additional provision, of the City and South London Railway Company and certain promoters of the Islington and Euston Railway Bill, together with proposed Amendments and clauses annexed thereto; read and referred to the Examiners.

CLAY CROSS RAILWAY BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE WATER BILL.

BRIGHTON AND ROTTINGDEAN SEA-SHORE ELECTRIC TRAMROAD BILL,

FAREHAM GAS BILL,

LEICESTERSHIRE AND WARWICKSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL,

EAST WORCESTERSHIRE WATER BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT TELEPHONE BOARD BILL [H.L.],

NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (MANCHESTER AREA) BILL [H.L.],

Read 2ª (according to order).

BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE BILL [H.L.],

PLYMOUTH, DEVONPORT, AND SOUTH-WESTERN JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

Read 3ª and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY (NEW LINES) BILL [H.L.].

Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order) and dispensed with, with respect to a Petition of Kinsman Hichens and others. Leave given to present the said Petition.

GRAND JUNCTION WATER BILL,

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL,

TICEHURST WATER BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2763. United States (Chicago, etc).
No. 2764. Greece (Thessaly).
No. 2765. France (Nantes).
No. 2766. Turkey (Trebizond).
No. 2767. Argentine Confederation (Buenos Ayres).

GOLD COAST.

Correspondence relating to Ashanti, 1901.

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 353. Southern Nigeria: Report for 1900.

CYPRUS.

Report for 1900-1901.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN, 1885.

Account for the year ended 31st March, 1902.

GREEK LOAN, 1898.

Account for the year ended 31st March, 1901.

LOCAL LOANS FUND (ACCOUNTS, 1900-1901).

Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the capital and income of the Local Loans Fund, for the year ended 31st March 1901; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon

SUPERANNUATION (PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS).

Treasury Minute, dated 10th April, 1902, declaring that, for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Administrative Examiner (Endowed Schools), under the Board of Education, South Kensington, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are required.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House tomorrow.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this Bill is designed to remove a grievance which is felt by musical publishers and composers. It simply reprints and applies to musical copyright four clauses of the Copyright Bill which passed your Lordships' House in 1900, with the object of giving additional and summary powers for the express purpose of stopping the piracy of musical works. My first feeling was to refuse to have anything to do with piecemeal legislation in the matter of copyright, but I soon found that the evil in the case of musical copyright was such a very serious one that it was desirable to introduce this Bill. This view is endorsed by my noble and learned friend Lord Thring and by Lord Knutsford, both of whom took an active part in the proceedings of the Copyright Committee.

By Clause 1, any person printing, selling, distributing, or importing any pirated musical work shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds for every copy so dealt with, such fine not to exceed in the whole fifty pounds in respect of any one transaction. By Clause 2, Sub-section 1, a specially authorised constable may seize, without warrant, pirated copies hawked or carried about, and bring them before a court of summary jurisdiction, which may order them to be destroyed or to be delivered to the owner; and by Sub-section 2 of the same clause a search warrant may be granted by a court of summary jurisdiction to search for and seize pirated copies reasonably believed to be within the jurisdiction of the court. Clause 3 provides that a constable authorised by the apparent owner of any musical copyright may seize pirated copies being hawked about and offered for sale.

I have received a great many communications from musical composers and publishers of music testifying to the need for such summary remedy. One of the largest firms of music publishers—Messrs. Boosey—inform me that many of their popular songs have been pirated and sold, that no publisher's name is printed on these pirated songs, and that unless some steps are immediately taken a large and valuable industry will utterly collapse. Enclosed with that letter was a pirated copy of a song entitled "The Holy City," and although the copyright price—1s. 4d.—is placed in the corner, the song is being sold in the streets for a few pence per copy. This afternoon I also received from Messrs. Boosey a copy of a pirate's catalogue of music. It is headed, "To all whom it may concern," and it proceeds—

"Sir or Madam,

"Having purchased an enormous quantity of high-class music, I am able to supply the following songs at ridiculously low prices."

Then follows a long list of the most popular songs of the day; but no name being attached, it is impossible to trace the printers. What is desired is a summary remedy for this kind of thing. At present, as soon as a song becomes popular, copies of it are secretly printed and hawked about in the principal thoroughfares of all towns and cities in the United Kingdom. The music is in all respects identical with the legitimate copies, except that it is printed on inferior paper, and is retailed at about twopence instead of two shillings per copy. The only remedy that exists at present is by action for injunction or damages, and both remedies are absolutely useless and inadequate in the majority of cases.

Your Lordships may perhaps have observed that Messrs. Boosey the other day obtained £115 damages against some defendants in respect of pirated music; but the firm informs me that the defendants say they cannot pay and that it is quite impossible to get the money. During the last few years the piracy of musical copyright has enormously increased, and has now reached such alarming proportions that it is having a paralysing effect on the legitimate trade in musical works. The Press has been full of complaints with regard to this matter, and it is high time something was done.

I have been in communication with several Members of the other House with regard to this Bill, and it has been represented to me that a good deal of objection may possibly be taken in the House of Commons to Sub-section 2 of Clause 2, giving a power of search to a constable. I shall be very sorry if that sub-section has to be dropped from the Bill, but, at the same time, rather than get nothing, I shall be quite content to move its omission at a later stage should your Lordships be good enough to read the Bill a second time.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House tomorrow.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (the Earl of HALSBURY) explained that this was a measure to codify the law relating to marine insurance. The Bill also contained several Amendments of a technical nature, which he did not imagine their Lordships would wish to discuss. The Bill was a very desirable one, and he trusted the House would give it a Second Reading.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House tomorrow.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY said the Bill was intended to amend the Matrimonial Causes Acts, 1857 and 1866, by extending the powers of the Court in relation to alimony and leave to intervene. In this way one or two defects in the administration of the law would be remedied.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House tomorrow.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.].

On the order to go into Committee on this Bill,

THE EARL OF HALSBURY said it was intended to consolidate, with Amendments, the enactments relating to Naval prize of war.

House in Committee (according to order).

Bill reported without amendment, and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

THE SUGAR CONFERENCE.

*LORD PIRBRIGHT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that a French Yellow-book, containing all the diplomatic documents relating to the Sugar Conferences of 1898 and 1901--2, together with full reports of all the meetings of the two Conferences, has been published in Paris by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs; and whether he will now lay on the Table of the House the corresponding documents in English.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (the Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, we have received a copy of the French Yellow-book containing documents relating to the Conference of 1898, and also to the recent Conference of 1901–2. The Papers relating to the first of those two Conferences were presented in 1898, and I shall be glad to obtain a copy of them for the noble Lord if he desires it. With regard to the Papers relating to the recent Conference, we are at the present moment preparing a Blue-book, and I hope to lay it on the Table of the House early next week, probably on Tuesday.

I do not propose to include in the Blue-book the whole of the *procès-verbaux* of the recent Conference. They cover over 400 pages of printed matter, and I believe that the information which they contain is sufficiently summarised in the Papers which we intend to present. The *procès-verbaux* are, moreover, in French, and I think that it would involve needless time and trouble to prepare an English version of them, which I gather is suggested in the noble Lord's Question. I shall be glad to put a copy of the French Yellow-book in the library for reference if the noble Lord desires it.

*LORD PIRBRIGHT: I should like to ask whether it is not the case that in respect of the Conference of 1887–8, the *procès-verbaux* were printed in French, and afterwards translated and printed in English?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I believe that to be the case, but obviously the task of translating a great mass of documents of that kind is a very serious one, and I do not think we should be justified in undertaking it, unless it was absolutely necessary for the purpose of giving public information.

STATE OF MILITARY SUPPLIES IN 1895.

*LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government if it is the fact that in October, 1894, contracts had been entered into with private firms for a supply of cordite, and that no other contract with private firms for land purposes was found necessary till February, 1899; and to ask on what grounds it has been stated that the supply of cordite and small arms ammunition was insufficient when the late Government quitted office in 1895 is based; and to move for Papers. I desire, in the first place, to remove a misapprehension under which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs apparently labours. On a former occasion, when I proposed to move my Motion in another form, the noble Marquess said it was necessary that he should have time to prepare his defence, thereby conveying the impression that I was the aggressor. But, my Lords, I am not the aggressor in this matter. I am merely defending myself against a bitter and serious attack. Surely it is my duty, as well as my right, to defend myself, and the Government of which I had the honour to be a member, from such an attack as that which has been made. It has been said that, if the attack deserved to be met at all, it ought to be met in the House of Commons. I scarcely think that the right hon. Gentleman who leads the House of Commons would be obliged to the noble Marquess the Prime Minister for the suggestion that this question should be raised there. The House of Commons has plenty to do with its Rules of Procedure and with two most important and contentious Bills recently introduced —those relating to Irish Land and the Education Bill. The Leader of the other House will, therefore, not be obliged to the Prime Minister for suggesting that Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman should move the adjournment in order to discuss the criticisms of the Secretary for War.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LORD PRIVY SEAL (the Marquess of SALISBURY): My contention was one affecting the order and practice of Parliament. It is not our business here to settle disputes that have arisen in the other House, and it is not the business of the other House to settle disputes that have arisen here. Each House must settle its own affairs. It will be endless if we have to settle here every difficulty that has arisen in the other House simply because the House of Commons, owing to the growth of business of another character, has not the time to settle it.

*LORD MONKSWELL: I do not think that the rule enunciated by the noble Marquess has been strictly observed. In the year 1893, when the Home Rule Bill was before the House, the Earl of Selborne, a distinguished predecessor of the noble Earl on the Woolsack not only referred to statements made in that session in the other House, but quoted a passage from a speech by Mr. Asquith. Surely this is, to some extent at all events, a matter of convenience, and not of strict constitutional procedure. Here this matter can be discussed at any length that noble Lords please without

in the least interfering with public business and without any damage to the prospects of legislation. The defeat of the late Government in 1895 was in more ways than one a very remarkable circumstance. It was remarkable in the first place because the House was induced to take the opinion of a then private Member with regard to the important question as to what reserve of ammunition was or was not sufficient, instead of the opinion of the Secretary of State and his responsible expert advisers; and it was remarkable in the second place because the defeat took place contrary to the confident expectations of those who are generally well-informed in such matters. I do not desire to go into ancient history. I should be perfectly content to let bygones be bygones; but this question has been raised quite gratuitously in the form of a very serious attack. My object tonight is to nail to the counter a false coin which has been current in certain circles for seven years past. I credit the Secretary of State for War and the noble Marquess with believing at the time, contrary to the opinion of the then Secretary of State and the War Office experts, that large reserves of small arms ammunition were desirable, and even of considerable importance. But I find it a little difficult to credit them with any very strong feeling in the matter; and I will explain why. When the late Government was turned out of office, a small Supplementary Vote of £70,000, as well as £40,000, saved by the out-going Government owing to the fall in the price of materials, was taken for small arms ammunition, though the statement had been made that there was a shortage of 80,000,000 cartridges. It was stated that, instead of a reserve of 40,000,000 or 50,000,000, we ought to have had a reserve of 130,000,000.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Whom by?

*LORD MONKSWELL: That was the statement of the present Secretary of State for War, and from the speech of the Colonial Secretary I infer that he thought the shortage amounted to something like 500,000,000 rounds of ammunition. The £110,000 which was asked for by the new Government would have provided only 25,000,000 rounds; and having asked for so little where so much might have been expected, one might suppose that the new Government would at least have taken care that they got what they asked. This point is so important that I trust the House will allow me to quote the words of the present Secretary of State for War in the session of 1895. The right hon Gentleman protested strongly because the supplies were sometimes delivered late by the contractors, and he added—

"We have laid it down for our special guidance that it is not sufficient to take the vote and give the order, but that we must receive the ammunition."

I have looked into the Appropriation Accounts for the year 1895-6, and I find that of the small sum of £70,000 asked for in the Supplementary Estimate, less than half was spent in the year, owing, as it was explained, "to delay in the delivery of trade supplies." The sum unexpended at the end of the financial year was £39,326. Notwithstanding the original statement that we were 80,000,000 cartridges short, the Government only asked for 25,000,000, and of that number they received a paltry 15,000,000 or so. Is it conceivable that if Parliament had known what was to happen it would have turned out the late Government? I wish to know whether the Government sat still under this breach of contract, which, according to their previous statements, must have seriously menaced the safety of the Empire; whether they punished the contractors; whether these contractors still supply the War Office; and whether the Government will publish the correspondence which must have taken place between the War Office and the contractors. You may depend upon it that contractors will not make contracts which they cannot fulfil if they know that a penalty will be exacted, and I should like to know whether a penalty was enforced in this case.

I would further ask the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary to say whether it is not the fact that during the time that he was Secretary of State for War the reserve of small arms ammunition fell below the amount at which it stood when the late Government was turned

out of office. I can understand that seven years ago the present Secretary of State for War and the noble Marquess were persuaded that large reserves were desirable, but I cannot understand how that belief can have survived the experience of the war. How can it be maintained that if we had been in power when the war began a want of ammunition would have compelled us to clear out of South Africa in three months? That is the accusation which has been brought against us. What has happened? It has been shown that Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's provision for the supply of cordite was ample; it has been admitted that the contracts he made in 1894 sufficed till February, 1899. The noble Marquess may say that, although he made ample contracts for cordite, he did not make ample contracts for the supply of cartridges. I would remind the noble Marquess that Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman was the first to put the supply of cordite cartridges out to contract, and that he entered into two experimental contracts, capable of indefinite expansion, each for the supply of 5,000,000 cartridges, to be delivered within the year.

The only issue, therefore, appears to be between storage and manufacture. We thought that there ought to be ample opportunities for obtaining ammunition from manufacturers as well as from our own factories; but we did not consider it desirable to have a greater storage of ammunition than was fairly reasonable. The question of storage is a difficult one. If cordite is stored too largely, there is always the danger of explosion and deterioration, and of the supply becoming obsolete owing to a change in the guns, and other reasons. The question that I raise to-night—and it is an important question for the future—is this—Were Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and his experts right, or were they wrong? This is a question which might have been discussed till doomsday but for the occurrence of this remarkable circumstance—that when the war broke out in 1899 there was practically little or no reserve of small arms ammunition at all. [The Marquess of LANSDOWNE dissented.] Of course, I am open to correction. In 1899 nearly all the small arms ammunition was composed of Mark IV. cartridges. Those cartridges had been in use for some two years, and, curiously enough, it was not until the summer of 1899 at Bisley that suspicion was aroused with regard to them. An inquiry was held during the early part of the Autumn, and the cartridges were condemned. The result of that condemnation was that the Mark IV. cartridges, which composed the bulk of our ammunition, had to be converted into Mark V. That conversion did not commence until about the time when the war began, and the consequence was that every cartridge sent out to South Africa after the outbreak of war was made during the war. Therefore the war was carried on, not only without the large reserve of ammunition which the present Secretary of State for War and the noble Marquess thought necessary, but practically without any reserve in England at all.

What was the reserve in South Africa when the war began? In South Africa there was an enormous quantity of these Mark IV. cartridges, and as they could not be converted into Mark V. in South Africa, they were sent back to England to be so converted, which occasioned the loss of at least two months. Again, with regard to the reserve in South Africa, Ladysmith was made a great place of arms, but after Ladysmith was invested no military stores there were available outside. It does seem to me that the fact that we were able to hold on in South Africa in this extraordinary concatenation of untoward circumstances was a complete vindication of the judgment of the late Government that it was unnecessary to have a large reserve of ammunition, and that it was much better to rely upon manufacture. I say that as regards reserve we could not have been worse off than the present Government, which had none. Some day, I presume, there will have to be an inquiry as to this Mark IV. ammunition, and why it was not condemned before. I am not, however, bringing any accusation against the noble Marquess with regard to that. But what I say is—granted we should have muddled over Mark IV. cartridges as badly as the present Government did; granted we should have shut up our military stores in Ladysmith as they did; granted we should have displayed no more judgment and foresight as to the magnitude of the operation than they did—where is the sense

or fairness of asserting that we should have been compelled to clear out of South Africa in three months? This assertion is made on behalf of a Government that had practically no reserve of small arms ammunition at all. What the noble Marquess has to show is that this assertion is not as baseless as I venture to say it is odious. I should like to have Papers with regard to the conversion of the Mark IV. ammunition, and the length of time this ammunition continued to be manufactured; and I wish to know whether the Mark IV. ammunition is still in use in India. It would also be interesting to know how many cartridges were turned out every week after the commencement of the war. I should like also to have the correspondence between the War Office and the contractors with regard to the delays in sending in the supplies, and I further press the noble Marquess to tell me whether or not it is the fact that during his administration of the War Office there was a time when there was a smaller reserve of small arms ammunition than we had when we were turned out of office in 1895.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the alleged insufficiency of the supply of cordite and small arms ammunition when the late Government quitted office in 1895. (*The Lord Monkswell.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord RAGLAN): My Lords, before proceeding to answer the questions of the noble Lord, I desire to congratulate him on having omitted that part of his original question which referred to the condition of the artillery, which, I venture to think, he is wise in not bringing before your Lordships' House. The question on which the late Government was turned out of office was not the question of the cordite contract, as the noble Lord seems to imagine. The late Government was impeached in 1895 on the amount of small arms ammunition in its possession, and was also attacked on the amount ordered and provided. This amount was deficient, and I believe the deficiency was due to the fact that in previous years the amount taken for ammunition had not been spent, and no attempt was made to make up the deficiency which was known to exist. It is correct that in the year 1894 the Government made a contract with certain firms for the supply of about 1,200 tons of cordite, to be spread over three years. Of that 1,200 tons about 1,000 tons was for the use of the Navy and 200 tons only for the Army. During the years to which the noble Lord's Question refers 700 tons of cordite was ordered from contractors for the use of the Admiralty; but the noble Lord has forgotten that the ordnance factories were also beginning to deliver large quantities of cordite for the use of the War Office. During those four years 825 tons of cordite was turned out by the Government factories, and 160 tons was obtained from the trade, in addition to 450 tons in the shape of small arms ammunition from the ordnance factories. The amount of cordite actually provided by the trade and the ordnance factories during those four years was, therefore, something like 2,200 tons, of which 1,435 tons was for the use of the Army. I am afraid I cannot follow the noble Lord's figures with regard to the supply of small arms ammunition stored at the time the late Government relinquished office. When the late Government relinquished office in 1895 there should have been in existence, according to their own scale, 146,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. The actual amount that was in existence was 92,000,000 rounds, the deficiency, therefore, being 54,000,000. When the present Government came into office in July, 1895, they immediately introduced a Supplementary Estimate and gave orders for fresh ammunition. A contract was put out for 14,000,000 rounds of ammunition, which was as much as could be obtained between that date and the end of the financial year. It required a considerable period to make up the supply of ammunition to the amount the Government considered it should have been. But between the years 1895 and 1899 very large demands were made on the Army for the Egyptian campaign, in the course of which a very large quantity of ammunition was expended. In addition to that, the amount of ammunition used in the ordinary annual practice

was largely increased, and, therefore, the ordinary wastage was much greater than ever it had been before; but such were the arrangements made by the new Government that when the war broke out in 1899 there were 168,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition in store.

*LORD MONKSWELL: Of what pattern? Was it Mark IV. ammunition?

*LORD RAGLAN: Some of it certainly was Mark IV. That was at the end of the practice season, when 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 rounds had been expended, and the reserves of ammunition were at their lowest. The fault found with the late Government was that they did not maintain their own authorised equipment. It is not a question of reserve ammunition; it is a question of the amount of equipment for an army in the field. That equipment was not maintained, and there was no reserve over and above that equipment. It was not for want of having their attention called to the matter that the Members of the late Government omitted to examine it. Their attention was called to it by the present Secretary of State for War in 1894, when Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman acknowledged that the reserves of ammunition were not what he could wish them to be. In 1895, in a private letter, the present Secretary of State for War drew the attention of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman to the deficieney of ammunition; but no steps were taken to bring the supply up to the requisite amount, and he brought the matter forward in Parliament, with the result that the Government of the day was defeated.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I do not think the noble Lord has altogether answered the Question that was put to him by my noble friend. The Question that my noble friend asked was—Whether it was not a fact that, owing to certain circumstances which probably were not the fault of the Government at all there was a great shortage of ammunition at the commencement of the war, and yet, owing, to the arrangements that had been made by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and his advisers before leaving office, that shortage was able to be supplied without any difficulty whatever. It is very easy for noble Lords on the Bench opposite to deal with this matter in a light-hearted way. They have obtained all the fruits of the defeat of the Government in 1895, and we have had to bear the blame of what I believe was really only a misunderstanding. What was said on this subject at the time naturally rankled in the minds of those who were then responsible for the War Office—and I would remind the House that my noble friend Lord Monkswell was the Under Secretary of State for War—and, I think, in the minds of those who were then the military advisers of the War Office. By the irony of events, as it seems to me, it has been sufficiently proved that the arrangements sanctioned by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, and which were declared to be adequate by his military advisers, have turned out to be adequate.

What was the policy of my right hon. friend in 1894-95? I would remind the House that at this period cordite was not a perfected powder. I can speak from my own personal experience. I used cordite in 1894-95 both for range and sporting purposes, and, so far as I could form an opinion, cordite was certainly inferior to other powders which I was able to use. I think the best proof of what I say is that even now there is a Committee sitting to inquire into this very question of cordite. My right hon. friend took the view that it was not desirable, until further experiments had been made, to have an over-large store in the national armouries, and I think that was a sound view to take. It was considered desirable to rely, not only on the Government manufacture of explosives, but also to encourage the establishment of other manufactories in different parts of the kingdom. At the time of which I am speaking great manufactories were being established in the north of Ireland and in Cornwall, with both of which the Government entered into contracts, which, I believe, have since proved exceedingly satisfactory. The policy of my right hon. friend was to have a certain moderate amount of ammunition in reserve—I think the amount laid down as the standard was 100,000,000 rounds—but to rely largely

on the power of manufacture when the demand arose. Accordingly encouragement was given, as far as possible, to the establishment of these private manufactories.

The new Government on taking office, were, of course, obliged to increase the store of ammunition. Then came the most unfortunate part of the whole thing, the decision that Mark IV. ammun tion was likely to produce the best results. Accordingly, the ammunition which the Government stored in the various arsenals throughout the world was principally Mark IV., but in the years 1898-99 Mark IV. was issued at Bisley and it was then discovered that the bullets did not give the best results. They were very apt to strip, and accidents happened which were attributed to the use of Mark IV. ammunition, which was also declared not to be altogether satisfactory for the purposes of accuracy in the use of the rifle. At the Hague Conference it was held that Mark IV. did not come within the recognised ammunition for civilised warfare. When the Government went to war they found themselves with great stores of Mark IV., which they wisely determined not to use and so avoid any possible charge of inhumanity. Therefore, at the beginning of the war this Mark IV. ammunition was useless for all practical purposes; and then it was that the Government fell back on the arrangements that had been made by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. I think we have a right to ask from the noble Marquess some explanation of these matters.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What we say is that this is not the House to raise the question, which originated in the other House.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I maintain that this is the proper House in which to raise the question, because the Minister who was responsible at that time sits in your Lordships' House. I do not think there is any necessity to go into disputes between Parties in the House of Commons. That is beside the question, and I do not wish to raise it. All that I desire is to get from the noble Marquess a statement as to whether or not I have fairly stated the real facts of the case.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I cannot help thinking that the noble Lord who raised this question has strangely misapprehended the Parliamentary aspect of this question. He has told the House that he had raised it for the purpose of replying to the bitter and gratuitous attack which had been levelled at him and his friends. That attack certainly has not been made in this House. The noble Lord appeared very anxious to take up a challenge which he supposes to have been thrown down in another part of this building, and he attempted to meet it by the unusual Motion of which he gave notice before the Easter holidays. Let me first say this—that neither in nor out of this House has there been any attempt on our part to level a gratuitous attack on the noble Lord or on those associated with him. If there has been an attack, it has been of the kind which I believe is not unknown in warfare—offensive defence. The noble Lord's friends made a bitter and violent attack on public men with whom we are in the habit of acting, and in order to meet these attacks those who were the subject of them were compelled to carry the war into the enemy's country. His Majesty's Government have been frequently taken to task since the outbreak of the war for the alleged inadequacy of their preparations. These attacks are natural enough. We endeavour to meet them, but we do not resent them in the least. But what we take exception to is that charges of want of foresight and preparation should be made against us, and made with very great acrimony, by persons who were at one time themselves responsible for the military administration of the country, and who were very far from being better prepared for a great emergency than we were. I certainly believe that from every point of view they were in their time much less well prepared than we were when the war broke out in 1899. I observe a very important change in the amended Motion of the noble Lord. The noble Lord's original Motion dealt not only with the

question of cordite, but with the question of artillery — a very important question indeed. The noble Lord has shown great discretion in omitting that part of his indictment, probably for the reason that on further inquiry he found that the investigation of that particular count was not likely to result very favourably for him and his friends.

As to the complaint of the noble Lord, I understand it to be this—That whereas Lord Rosebery's Government was defeated on a question connected with cordite, the Government which followed it lived, so to speak, for four or five years on the proceeds of the foresight and preparations of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. I think those who followed the remarks of my noble friend will have seen how completely that assertion falls to the ground. It is perfectly true that before leaving office Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman had given very large orders for cordite to the trade. The cordite question is one thing, and the small arms ammunition question, on which Lord Rosebery's Government was turned out, is quite another. But of that large order for cordite given by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, only 200 tons was for land service; the rest was for the Admiralty. Let me say in passing that the 1,000 tons which fell to the lot of the Admiralty were very far indeed from tiding the Admiralty over the years 1894-99. During that period the Admiralty was obliged to order—in 1898—about 800 tons more cordite. The noble Lord found it, however, convenient to omit altogether from his argument and from his calculations the cordite supplied by the ordnance factories. Our great effort when we came into office was to increase the output of the ordnance factories.

*LORD MONKSWELL: So was ours.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: But you did not succeed.

*LORD MONKSWELL: We intended to duplicate the nitro-glycerine factory.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Yes, intended! From the ordnance factories during those periods to which the noble Lord's Motion has reference I find we obtained 825 tons of cordite for land service—that is four times as much as the 200 tons of cordite included in Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's order. But that is not all. The noble Lord has talked about cordite and his Motion relates to cordite, but he knows perfectly well, and his speech showed it, that you cannot consider this question without taking into account not only orders of cordite, but orders of small arms ammunition? I find that between the years 1894 and 1899 we obtained from the ordnance factories no less than 228,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition—that is, about the equivalent of 450 tons of cordite—and that we also obtained from the trade 82,000,000 rounds or the equivalent of about 160 tons of cordite; so that, as my noble friend says, that much-vaunted order given to the trade by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, so far from sufficing for our wants during the years 1894 to 1899, had to be supplemented by other orders amounting to 1,400 and odd tons of cordite, either in the shape of cordite or in the shape of small arms ammunition, from other sources.

Now I come to the action of His Majesty's Government when it came into office in 1895. I will not repeat the figures which have been given to the House by my noble friend, but I am here to state in the most positive manner that when we took stock, we found ourselves face to face with a very large deficit in the amount of small arms ammunion which we should have had in order to provide the supply required by the then authorised scales. That deficit was a large one at the time we took office and threatened to become a much larger one at the end of the practising season, during which large quantities of ammunition are consumed by the troops. Then, says the noble Lord, why did not you make up that deficit by issuing very much larger orders than those which you actually ordered? He says, and I believe it is true, that the expenditure immediately authorised did not exceed £110,000. The answer to that is perfectly simple. We could not get the cordite, we could not get the ammunition; we could only order what there was a reasonable prospect of obtaining, and that amount

was not a very large one. Why? Because the outgoing Government had left things in such a condition that the producing power, both of the trade and of the factories, was of an extremely limited kind, and it would have been ridiculous if we had taken enormous sums of money, which we could not spend, and issued immense orders which we had no prospect of obtaining. But ever since that time we have been steadily and consistently building up our reserves and supplies of small arms ammunition. I give to the House this figure, which seems to me worth consideration. At the end of March, 1895, the reserve of small arms ammunition, including everything, stood at 90,500,000 rounds; at the same date in 1899——

* LORD MONKSWELL said he would like a comparison with the year 1896.

* THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: If the noble Lord wanted this minute information about particular dates, he should have said so in his notice. In his notice he does not say a word about small arms ammunition. His notice refers to cordite, and yet he complains that we cannot tell him the exact number of rounds of small arms ammunition.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The noble Marquess will find on referring to the Paper, that small arms ammunition is mentioned in the notice.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I beg the noble Lord's pardon; I am wrong. I am afraid I cannot tell the noble Lord the exact number of rounds at the intermediate dates. But I bear witness that we did steadily, while in office, continue to build up a large reserve of small arms ammunition, and in 1899 we had a reserve which was actually double the reserve held by the late Government in the spring of 1895. That was the case, in spite of the very large demands which were made upon us by the Egyptian campaign and by the increase of the number of rounds authorised for practice purposes. Both noble Lords asked me, I think with very great earnestness, whether there was a moment during our tenure of office when our reserve fell below the reserve held by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman immediately before he left office. I should be very much surprised to find that it was so. My strong impression is that our reserves went on increasing. They fluctuated, no doubt, but I doubt whether at any moment the reserve fell to such a figure as that at which it stood when we took office in 1895.

The noble Lord pressed me very much on this point — whether in the reserve of ammunition for which we took credit, a considerable quantity of Mark IV. was included. Certainly it was. The noble Lord will remember that Mark IV. ammunition was found fault with for various reasons. It was quite obvious that we could not transform it by a stroke of the pen into ammunition of a different kind; but it would be altogether misleading the House to say that, because part of our reserve consisted of ammunition of this particular class, that ammunition was valueless for military purposes. One of the complaints of Mark IV. to which the noble Lord opposite adverted was that it was considered by the Hague Conference to be of a kind calculated to inflict needless injury and suffering upon the persons who might be wounded by it. We did not accept that view. We combated it. At the same time we desired very much that the ammunition used by the British Army should be of a kind to which no one could take exception upon grounds of humanity, and we, therefore, modified the pattern. But that complaint went to show, not that Mark IV. was useless or innocuous, but that it was too dangerous and too deadly in its effects upon those against whom it might be used.

There is another point to which I should like to call the attention of the noble Lord. He referred several times to the importance of securing sufficient sources of supply for ammunition. Now, we took great pains to develop those sources of supply, and I think it may interest your Lordships to know that, whereas in the year 1895–96 all the small arms ammunition that we could obtain from the trade was 1,500,000 rounds, we were able in the first six months of the war to obtain from the trade no less than 28,000,000 rounds. With regard to the ordnance factories, I find that, whereas in the year 1895–96 we

obtained from that source only 14,000,000 rounds, in the first half-year of the war we obtained no less than 42,000,000 rounds. That is to say, the trade and the factories at the beginning of the war were producing small arms ammunition at the rate of 140,000,000 rounds a year. I think that shows that we were not entirely unsuccessful in placing the supply of small arms ammunition upon a somewhat better footing than that on which we found it when we took office. My noble friend suggests that everything which was done after we took office ought to be credited to the meritorious schemes of our predecessors. He will forgive us if we do not quite admit that and if we take a little of the credit to ourselves. I confess that the whole of this discussion strikes me as being of a somewhat unreal description. We have been considering really whether Lord Rosebery's Government was turned out in 1895 owing to a mistake. I am afraid that, whatever may be the result of the noble Lord's researches, all the King's horses and all the King's men will not set Humpty-Dumpty up again. Therefore this discussion strikes me as being not a very useful one. What surely we have to consider is not so much the state of affairs in 1895, as whether at the present time our sources of supply are adequate, and whether there is anything which can be done—and I am sure noble Lords on both sides of the House will be glad to co-operate to that end—to make our military position in respect to small arms ammunition, artil ery, and other such matters stronger and more satisfactory than it is at present.

*LORD MONKSWELL: The important question on which the Liberal Government were turned out of office was the small arms ammunition question. At the same time I should be prepared to join issue with the noble Marquess in reference to artillery. In the time of the Liberal Government the Jameson Raid had not taken place, and the state of things was entirely different from that which had to be dealt with later. The noble Marquess, in referring to small arms ammunition, has urged that the county was bound to be in a dangerous position for eight or nine months after the Liberals left office. Why then did not the Government to which he belonged strain every nerve to get the requisite amount of cordite? It is said that the matter was one of cartridges as well as cordite. The great complaint on which the Liberal Government was turned out, however, was deficiency of cordite. I would press for correspondence between the noble Marquess and the contractors who had promised to deliver 10,000,000 rounds in the course of the year and only delivered 1,500,000 rounds. If the noble Marquess wishes to make out that he had a larger supply at the beginning of the war than we had, he ought to tell the House the proportion of Mark IV. ammunition in stock at that time.

On Question, Motion negatived.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING-CLASSES.

Moved, That the Message of the House of Commons of the 18th of March last with respect to the Housing of the Working Classes be taken into consideration (The Lord Churchill); agreed to; the said Message considered accordingly.

Then it was moved that a Committee of Seven Lords be appointed to join with a Committee, as mentioned in the said Message; agreed to.

The Lords following were named of the Committee—

E. Camperdown.	L. Wenlock.
E. Carrington.	L. Sandhurst.
V. Hampden.	L. Lamington.
L. Hatherton.	

Ordered, that such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a Chairman.

Then a Message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons in answer to their said Message to inform them of the appointment of the said Committee by this House, and to propose that the Joint Committee do meet in Committee Room B on Friday the 2nd of May next at Three o'clock.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 42.)

PEER'S BANKRUPTCY ANNULLED.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that he had received from the Registrar in Bankruptcy of the High Court of Justice a certificate under the Seal of the said Court, that on the 11th day of April 1902, the said Court made an order annulling the bankruptcy of the most noble William Angus Drogo, Duke of Manchester.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 17th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [BY ORDER].

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(3.15.) MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said the Bill was, in fact, the identical Bill which was presented by the Company last year for the consideration of Parliament, and it would be in the recollection of hon. Gentlemen that on that occasion Parliament rejected the measure, not because of its merits or demerits, but because of the circumstances surrounding certain clauses which savoured of proceedings which he did not hesitate to describe as proceedings such as of low-class City company promoters. He had no desire to hinder the railway company in the conduct of its legitimate business, and if the rumour which he had heard was well founded, it would seem that the contention which he had put forward last year had had good effect, and had borne excellent fruit, because he understood that the company had undertaken to rebuild certain houses, and put into repair other houses, and not to use a particular site until Parliament had given its sanction for the purposes of the railway. He would ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the rumour to which he had referred was, or was not, correct. If it were correct, it would be the fact that the company had, under pressure of Parliament, tardily recognised its duty according to the law of the land. There had been a good deal of assiduous lobbying in connection with the Bill, but he hoped the effect would be to prove that the directors of railway companies could not expect to be successful when they were seeking to avoid their responsibilities in these matters. It was not his intention, providing he got an assurance that the rumour to which he had referred was correct, to further oppose the Second Reading of this Bill. His action had been dictated by motives of public policy, and all he had desired was to insist that public bodies should not evade their obligations under the law. He did not, consequently, propose to press the Motion which stood in his name on the Paper, and all he wished to do was to ask the Home Secretary if he could confirm the rumour he had before alluded to.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said he had received a communication from the London and North Western Railway Company to the effect that the buildings, the acquisition of which was one of the causes of the action taken by the House last year, would be repaired and let to the same class of tenants as before.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked if there was any guarantee that the rents of the houses would not be raised.

MR. RITCHIE said there was none, but no doubt the railway company would

recognise it was not to their interest to raise the rents. He wished to point out, however, that the Bill before the House was of quite unobjectionable a character, and he thought his hon. friend had exercised a wise discretion in not pressing his opposition to its Second Reading.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said it was rather difficult to judge on the spur of the moment whether the assurances of the company, as conveyed by the Home Secretary, were sufficiently satisfactory. He thought that the Committee should have an opportunity of considering the matter, and of deciding whether or not some clause should be inserted in the Bill to secure the particular object they had in view.

MR. RITCHIE: That is nothing whatever to do with the Bill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that was unfortunately the difficulty they had to face, and it certainly should not be lost sight of. It was quite clear that this powerful railway corporation had practically intended to drive a coach and four through a statute of the House of Commons, and he congratulated the hon. Member on having so successfully raised an obstacle in their way.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he did not intend to reply to the offensive epithets which had been thrown across the floor of the House in regard to the company. If hon. Members wanted any guarantee that they would carry out their word, surely the good name of the London and North Western Company was in itself a sufficient guarantee.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) pointed out that there were certain duties imposed by law upon the company in regard to the housing, or rather the rehousing, of persons whom they dishoused, and it was essential that care should be taken to see they carried out their statutory obligations. He hoped the Home Secretary would see that the railway companies fulfilled their obligations, which had not always been the case in the past.

Mr. Ritchie.

* MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must point out that that is not the question before the House. The question of the housing of the working classes has nothing whatever to do with this matter.

* MR. RITCHIE protested against the language of the hon. Gentleman, and against the assumption that the Government had not compelled the railway companies to carry out their statutory obligations.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he had pointed out that in the past the Home Office had not fulfilled its duty in regard to this matter, and to that statement he adhered, although he did not suggest that it was necessarily the right hon. Gentleman who was responsible. He could not be responsible for the mistakes of his predecessors in office.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) suggested that it was important to include some provision in the Bill to prevent the undue raising of rents on the houses.

* MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the matter hardly arose on the Motion before the House.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said the opposition to Bills of this kind was a good thing, because it caused the companies to recognise that the House of Commons had a certain amount of authority in these matters, and was not a machine for the mere passing of legislation on their behalf. He had made several inquiries into this matter, and he thought that if the company gave an assurance to the President of the Board of Trade that the tenants of this property would not be dispossessed, the Bill ought to be allowed to pass its Second Reading. The suggestions of hon. Members opposite could be dealt with in Committee.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

BELFAST CORPORATION BILL.

[BY ORDER.]

(3.35.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the Instruction which he desired to move referred to Clauses 5 and 6 of the Bill,

which gave power to the Corporation to acquire the land on which the Ulster Hall was built, and the building itself. and to make any alteration which they thought fit in the hall. As was well known to Members acquainted with Belfast, the Ulster Hall was the only hall in the city in which a really large public gathering could be held. It was a very fine hall—perhaps the best and finest in Ireland for that purpose. It had been owned and controlled hitherto by a private syndicate, who treated it as a commercial speculation and let it for public meetings of every character, with a few exceptions, and for public entertainments. He understood that, being a very large and valuable hall, it had not been a very successful speculation lately, and it was now desired, very naturally, to sell it to the Corporation to be used as a town hall or a place of public assembly. He asked hon. Members to observe that there was nothing in the terms of the Instruction to prevent the Corporation laying down any set of regulations which would render absolutely impossible any abuse in the way of hiring the hall or its devotion to any object of a generally objectionable character—he meant any improper or indecent exhibition. The Corporation under that Instruction would be perfectly at liberty to lay down any body of general regulations, covering the use and letting of the hall and the only object and effect of the Instruction would be that the Corporation should not be at liberty to boycott or exclude from the hall any body of citizens on religious or political grounds. Was it or was it not fair that the hall should be open to all who desired to use it for a fair and reasonable purpose, and that it should not be denied to any of the minority of the citizens who chanced to differ politically or religiously from the majority? In England, bodies of Irish Nationalists in the great cities were much less numerous as compared with their numbers in Belfast; and yet in Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, or London, the town halls were never denied to any body of Irish Nationalists who desired them for the purpose of holding meetings, and that was even true of periods when Party passion and Party feeling ran very high, and when the body of men who asked for them, was most violently opposed to the views of the majority of the ratepayers, and, of course, to the corporate bodies who controlled the town halls. He had never known an instance in which anyone suggested that the use of the town hall should be refused because his politics chanced to differ from theirs. He thought it was a recognised principle of public life in this country that no matter how much the majority in any meeting or Corporation might differ from the minority who desired to use the city hall for a political or religious character, that it was desirable that they should not be interfered with and that they should be at perfect liberty to state their views, so long as they observed law and preserved decency and order, and complied with the general regulations under which the hall was managed. That was all he asked for in this Instruction and nothing more.

When he first put this Instruction on the Paper, he was under the impression, after a conversation with gentlemen representing the Corporation, that it would be unopposed, and he was sorry to find that that was not the case. The debate would chiefly turn upon the question—Were they justified on grounds of necessity in asking for this clause? He knew it would be said, and very strongly contended, that they were insulting the Corporation by asking for a security of this character. It had been said in the course of past debates concerning Belfast that the Corporation and the House of Commons had again and again decided—unwillingly, of course, and with considerable regret—that in Belfast Party feeling ran so high that it was necessary and just to apply some exceptional treatment in these matters. No man in Ireland regretted that more than he did, and he hoped the time would come before very long when that condition of things would have passed away, and when they would be able to trust the Corporation of Belfast to deal with the Nationalist minority in the same way that the Corporation of Glasgow, or Birmingham, or London dealt with the Nationalist minority in those centres. The experience of Irish Nationalists in this matter had been that this Ulster Hall had been in the hands of a syndicate of private individuals, who included amongst them some representatives of the Corporation of Belfast, and they, at all events,

might be taken as a very fair average representation of the same sentiment which inspired the Corporation of Belfast. On more than one occasion in the past, application had been made by men who represented 70,000—one-fourth of the population of the city — and the hall had been denied to them; and on one occasion, not very long ago, the owners of the hall said they would let it to the Nationalists, who had applied for it for a public meeting, for £100; whereas it was let to gatherings in sympathy with the Corporation and the majority in Belfast for £15. Was that fair? There was nothing in the Bill as it stood to prevent the Corporation doing exactly the same thing. A very curious thing happened last autumn. Again an application was made to the proprietors of the Ulster Hall for liberty to hold a meeting, which was to be addressed by the hon. Member for Waterford and himself, and again it was refused. But on further consideration — he would not say it was because this Bill was coming on—the trustees or owners of the hall sent word that they could have it on the same terms as it was usually let. He thought probably the shadow of this Bill had some effect upon it. They held their meeting, the hall was packed to the very doors by a very respectable audience, who paid a very high price to go in; and there was no mischief of any kind done, and the meeting was a great success. Why should one-fourth of the citizens be denied the use of the only great public hall of the city? That was the issue contained in the Instruction, and he thought hon. Members who approached this question in a fair spirit, when they had heard what had been their experience as regards the Ulster Hall in the past, and when they knew that those private individuals who had had control over the hall in the past might be fairly accepted as representatives of the spirit of the majority of the Corporation, would agree that there was nothing unreasonable in the fear that the same policy would be pursued in the future, if the Corporation were allowed without any check to acquire possession of the hall, as was pursued in the past by the private owners. But there was this great difference—that, of course, in any city in the world, however we might condemn their action and regret it, any body of private individuals who purchased a site or a hall were perfectly entitled to let or refuse to let it to whoever they liked. But it was a very different matter when the hall was purchased out of the pockets of the ratepayers of the city. It then became a great action of oppression and injustice if the majority of the Corporation were to deny to the minority the use of the Town Hall, for which they were paying as well as the other citizens. That was the reason why the claim he made was so great to have this provision inserted.

On what ground did the Corporation object to the Instruction? He should wait with curiosity to hear. How could any member or representative of the Corporation say frankly or honestly that he believed that there was no risk or danger of the Corporation meeting in the way he had described and refusing the hall for meetings of a political complexion different from their own? Every man who knew Belfast, and anyone concerned with the honour and peace and the cultivation of goodwill amongst the different sections of the city, would be anxious that such a provision as this should be put into the Bill in order to protect the Corporation against themselves or against certain hot-headed members of their body, and to secure that this additional subject of contention and bitter feeling should not be added to the many which already, unhappily, existed. There was only one other ground on which he could conceive any Member for Belfast objecting to the intoduction of this safeguarding clause. It might be said that the hall and the ratepayers must be protected against damage, the cost of which would fall upon them. That appeared to be a most preposterous argument. Surely those who were holding the meeting inside the hall were not going to damage it. The damage could only come from some crowd attacking the hall or interfering with the meeting, and he thought it was a very strange argument that the hall should not be let to a section of the population opposed to the Corporation in politics, for fear that any section of the population might attack the meeting and damage the

hall. That appeared to be a kind of premium on rowdyism and riot, and intimating to the people who would cultivate those arts in Belfast that if they were only riotous they would succeed in their object of preventing the holding of meetings. But really it was not a good argument. Those who knew the topography of Belfast and the position of the hall knew that it was removed from what might be called the fighting district, and that it could not be interfered with by a mob if the police took ordinary precautions. What took place last Autumn when he spoke there? They had an immense meeting, and all kinds of threats and rumours were in the air. When the meeting assembled, a number of boys and noisy people assembled outside the doors of the hall, but a very few police dealt with them effectually, and not the slightest disturbance took place. The hall was so situated that proper police arrangements could absolutely secure it from the invasion of anything like a formidable mob. That was a question really of the rights of a minority, and if a similar case arose either in Dublin or Cork, and if the Nationalist Members had any reason to suppose that the Corporation of Dublin or Cork would seek to deny to an Orange meeting or a Tory meeting the use of the town hall, purchased and maintained out of the ratepayers' money, they would be delighted to agree to any clause in the Bill restraining these Corporations from action such as that. He appealed to hon. Members opposite in dealing with this question to dismiss from their minds for a moment Party feelings and Party considerations, and address themselves to it simply as a question of fair play to a minority, and of protection of the right of public meeting. He begged to move.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) said he had much pleasure in seconding the Motion of his honourable friend, because if the instruction were inserted in the Bill it would, in his opinion, tend to break down the religious and political intolerance which unhappily characterise the dominant party in Belfast. Belfast was famed for its progress, its enlightenment, and, in some respects, its liberality; and he could not conceive how the Corporation could object to a large minority of the ratepayers being afforded the use of a hall purchased, to a considerable extent, with their own money. To his mind, the clause would be a relief to the Corporation, as it would get them out of a difficulty. There was a very intolerant section in Belfast, which had considerable voting interest, and if the Corporation would set that section an example of broad-mindedness, toleration, and liberality, it would be a great boon to the city. He had no doubt that nothing but good would come of it. It was quite time that the recurring riots which had drenched the streets of Belfast in blood should be put an end to, not only by the opinion of this House, but also by those who had the destinies of Belfast in their hands. The Corporation might say that what was proposed was coercion, but they were always ready in Belfast to use coercion against political opponents. It was not coercion, but a small modicum of that fair play and justice which the House accorded to minorities throughout the whole of the Empire. Why, then, should the Catholics and Nationalists of Belfast be exceptionally treated? He hoped the representatives of the Belfast Corporation in the House would rise above the narrow bigotry and intolerance which were a blot on Belfast, and had long been a by-word among the civilised peoples of the world.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Belfast Corporation Bill to insert a clause providing that the Ulster Hall be available for the use of any section of the community of Belfast who comply with the general regulations laid down by the Corporation for the letting and use of the hall; and shall not be refused on religious or political grounds by the Corporation to any body of citizens who desire to use it."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.) said that the hon. Member for East Mayo had brought a very serious charge against the previous administration of the Ulster Hall, but the hon. Member did not make it clear that up to the present the Corporation had no power over the hall. The hon. Member also said that a large

number of members of the Corporation were connected with the hall, either as owners or administrators; but that was not the case. The hall was built primarily, to a large extent, for the purposes of literature and music. It had within its walls one of the finest organs in Ireland, the gift of one of Belfast's noblest citizens. The hall was built by share capital, and, not being profitable, owing to the enormous expense of keeping it up, it went into the market, and the Corporation ultimately agreed to buy it. An Act of Parliament was required, and it was duly advertised, and subsequently a plebiscite was demanded, which resulted in a majority of four to one in favour of the purchase of the hall. No meeting against the purchase had been held in Belfast, and the hon. Member for East Mayo had received no evidence whatever which could justify him in moving his Motion. No doubt the hon. Member was discharging a splendid duty, and earning for himself a large amount of advertisement in connection with affairs in Belfast, but he was acting without the fiat of the citizens, and his action was self-devoted and not representative. Of course, according to the hon. Member, Belfast was a most bigoted place, but what was the fact? Could the hon. Member name any other city of the same political complexion in which he and the hon. Member for Waterford could hold a large meeting without the slightest interference?

MR. DILLON said he gave the cases of Birmingham, Manchester, London, and Glasgow.

SIR JAMES HASLETT said he was dealing with Ireland. If he went to Limerick and called a similar meeting, he would be pelted through the city. What were the facts in regard to Belfast? For some years past the Corporation had had a public hall under its own administration, and he challenged hon. Members to produce a single instance in which the Roman Catholics had asked for and been refused the use of that hall. On the contrary, although they were less than one-fourth of the population, they had had more than one-fourth of the occupation of the hall, at a purely nominal rate, for their religious and charitable gatherings.

Sir James Haslett.

MR. DILLON asked in what hall under the control of the Corporation Nationalists had ever been permitted to hold a meeting in Belfast.

SIR JAMES HASLETT instanced the Exhibition Hall, but said he did not refer to Nationalists. A considerable proportion of the Catholics of Belfast, so far from being Nationalists, utterly abhorred Nationalism. If this Instruction were passed, the Corporation, even though the city were in a state of riot, would be unable to refuse the use of the hall for a political meeting.

MR. DILLON said the hon. Member was putting a wrong interpretation on the Motion. If the city were in a state of riot, any general regulations would not apply, either to Nationalist or Orange meetings.

SIR JAMES HASLETT contended that, as no bye-law could be greater than the Act under which it was made, the Corporation would be unable to refuse any such application. The ground on which this Motion was put forward was that the Belfast Corporation was intolerant. That charge had been made often before, and had been refuted as often as made. Hon. Members declared that Ireland should be allowed to manage her own affairs. Why did they not apply that principle to Belfast, instead of asking the Imperial Parliament to interfere in a matter of this kind? The past history of Belfast bore testimony to its fair treatment of minorities. The hon. Member for East Mayo always received a kindly welcome when he visited Belfast.

MR. DILLON said the last time but one he was there he was received with a perfect whirlwind of nuts and stones.

SIR JAMES HASLETT said that at any rate the hon. Member had been more kindly received in Belfast than in certain places in the south and west of Ireland, where he appeared to be dominant. He had never been charged with deserting the people whom he had betrayed, or of leaving people on the roadside not provided for——

*MR. SPEAKER intimated to the hon. Member was going into matters not relevant to the proposal before the House.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (continuing) pointed out that Belfast had agreed to acquire this hall; its citizens had declared their satisfaction that the Corporation should acquire it, and they had not demanded the imposition of the slightest embargo. There was a constitutional way of expressing opinion on such matters, but no action had been taken against the Corporation. On the contrary, the citizens had expressed their opinion fully, and the hon. Member opposite stood alone in his opposition. He in no sense represented the general feeling of the people; he did not represent Belfast.

MR. DILLON: I represent one-fourth of the people.

SIR JAMES HASLETT did not admit that. He claimed that he, as a representative of Belfast, and his hon. friends around him, represented the citizens, while the hon. Member for East Mayo in no sense represented them or their opinions in relation to this hall.

(4.12.) MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford, E.) greatly regretted the tone of the speech of the hon. Member who had just resumed his seat. He could not see any reason why this question should not be discussed with perfect calmness, and without importing those elements of bitterness into the debate, which, unfortunately, were too much in evidence in the public mind in the north of Ireland. The House must really be getting tired of debates about Belfast. Belfast was, in many respects, a very great and prosperous city, but it was the only city in the United Kingdom which invariably came before Parliament in discussions, which raged around these questions of bigotry and intolerance. The hon. Gentleman opposite had complained that the hon. Member for East Mayo had no right to speak on behalf of the Nationalists of Belfast, and he contended that the Nationalists, if they wanted to make their voices heard, should do so in a constitutional way. What more constitutional way could there be than that of speaking through a Member of the House who represented their political opinions? They comprised one-fourth of the population of Belfast; they had no direct representative in the House, because their opinions were swamped by the anti-Nationalist majority around them, and when they sought to put their views before the House, through a Member who represented their political views, the hon. Member who came forward on their behalf was told that he had no right to speak for them. The position of the hon. Gentleman was absurd. One would think from the his speech that the hon. Member for East Mayo had in some way opposed the principle of the Bill, and that he was opposed to giving to the Corporation the ownership and control of this hall. But the hon. Member had taken up no such position. The hon. Gentleman opposite had alluded to a plebiscite, and said that an overwhelming majority of votes was cast in favour of the Corporation obtaining the ownership of the hall. Quite so. He was himself in favour of the Corporation owning the hall. It was proper that the municipal authority in a great city like Belfast should have the ownership of a large hall such as the Ulster Hall, which could be used for the purposes for which town halls in England were used. All that was asked was that some guarantee should be given that the use of the Hall should not be confined to one section of the population. The hon. Member opposite had laboured the point very much that this was a Motion made in the interests of the Catholics of Belfast, and he had asserted—although it was not fully correct—that there were a large number of Catholics who were not Nationalists. But what had they to say to this question? The proposal was simply that a guarantee should be given, that when the regulations which the Corporation were to be perfectly free to make—they might be as rigid and strict as possible—were complied with, the use of the hall should not be denied to any section of the population on purely religious or political grounds. The hon. Gentleman had declared that no instance could be given of halls in Belfast being refused for such reasons. He was sadly misinformed about his own constituency

SIR JAMES HASLETT: I said there was no instance in which the Corporation of Belfast had refused the hall under their control.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that did not meet the case at all. The Corporation had had under their control only one hall, and that was a hall never used for political purposes. It was, in point of fact, a concert or dancing-hall, a hall of amusement. That hall had been given by the Corporation for Catholic bazaars. But that did not touch the question at all. They were now speaking of the use of the hall for political purposes, and of its being granted to the Party out of sympathy with the Corporation. There had been such instances. There was an occasion two years ago when, accompanied by his hon. friend, he went to Belfast to address a great public political meeting. The use of this very Ulster Hall was refused, and they were obliged to hold the meeting in a wretchedly small hall which could not accomodate one-fourth of the people who desired to get in. The result was that there were thousands of people surging around the hall, to the great danger of the public peace. They wanted to prevent the possibilityof that happening. The men who refused Ulster Hall to them were precisely the same class and the same political Party that was dominant today in the Corporation, and he did not know that they had any reason to believe if the Ulster Hall was refused two years ago by these gentlemen it would not be refused a year hence by the Corporation, who represented the same class and the same political Party in Belfast. They were not making an unreasonable demand. If the House would consider this question fairly they would come to the conclusion that a hall of this kind ought to be under proper regulations and at the disposal of all sections of the population. If hon. Members would look back to the history of Belfast, they would see that they had a strong justification for fearing that this would not take place if the hall were given to the Corporation without some such Instruction as his hon. friend had moved. He believed that this Instruction, if put into the Bill, would tend to break down that wretched feeling of religious and political bigotry which was the disgrace of Belfast today. If this Instruction were passed it would be a warning to all sections of the population of Belfast that in the opinion of this House freedom of speech ought to be accorded to all sections of the community; and it would be a declaration by this House that one fourth of the population, because they held views which were repugnant to the majority of their fellow townsmen, ought not to be denied their right of free speech and public meeting. He believed that by putting this Instruction in the Bill this House would not only secure the right of free speech in Belfast, but it would also have, generally, a most valuable effect in hastening the arrival of the day which he, and others who thought with him, had perhaps more reason to wish hastened than any other people in Ireland, when the reproach and disgrace which rested upon it at the present moment would be lifted off the north of Ireland, when this feeling of religious and political bigotry will cease to exist, and cease to menace, as it did at present, the peace of the city every day that passed over the heads of the citizens.

(4.24.) MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said the hon. Member for Waterford had spoken about the religious bigotry which prevailed in Belfast. He did not wish to enter fully into this matter, but he agreed with what had been said that it was a great pity that no Bill which had the object of effecting an improvement in Belfast, could be brought into this House without there being a bitter political and religious element introduced. He was pleased to say that on this occasion that feeling had not originated on the ministerial side of the House. Any feeling of religious antagonism which had been imported into this debate had been brought in by the supporters of the Resolution which had been proposed by the hon. Member for East Mayo. With regard to the Resolution itself there were two questions to be asked in connection with it. The first was, was it reasonable, and the second, was it necessary? If the hon. Member for East Mayo meant that in the letting of this hall no distinction at all should be made to any Party, then he entirely agreed with it; but if he went further and said that this Resolution was necessary to procure equality of treatment, then he differed from him entirely. The

hon. and learned Member for Waterford said he had no assurance that the Corporation would carry out any such undertaking. In this he was mistaken. He was afraid he had not taken into consideration the change which had taken place in the composition of the Corporation since the last Bill for the enlargement of the boundaries was passed. He could not see any reason why such dangers should be entertained. No instance had been quoted in which the Corporation refused to let the hall. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said that Ulster Hall was refused to him, but that hall had no connection whatever with the Corporation. He thought it was very unfortunate that such a Motion as this should be made. Hon. Members opposite had complained about the prejudices of one Party against another in Belfast, which resulted in riot. If they thought it was absolutely necessary that something should be put into the Bill to compel the Corporation to cease to let the hall to all parties, surely the evidence in support of that course could be brought before the Committee, and it could then be decided on the evidence of witnesses whether it was necessary to put such a clause in the Bill or not. But why should a Resolution be passed by the House binding the Committee hard and fast without any proof whatever? He thought it would be very much better if the hon. Member were to withdraw his Motion, get his evidence together, and place it before the Committee, and having got the witnesses before them, the Committee could put in a clause to safeguard the interests of the Party with which the hon. Member for East Mayo was connected if they thought the evidence justified it. He strongly objected to such an imputation being put upon the Belfast Corporation as was implied in this Resolution without any evidence whatever.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he intervened for one moment for one specific purpose only. He wanted to call attention to the very large and important question about which, in his humble judgment, the Committee ought to be authoritatively advised before it proceeded to deal with this Bill at all one way or the other. He wanted to know what was the law of Ireland on the main point involved in the Instruction which had been moved by his hon. friend. The main thing about the Instruction was that the Ulster Hall should be available for any section of the community of Belfast who complied with the general regulations laid down by the Corporation for the letting and use of the Hall. That was the essential portion of the Instruction, and the rest of it might be subject to some misinterpretation. He wanted to know what was the law in Ireland now upon this point.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): What is the law in Great Britain?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was not prepared to say, and it was not his business to advise the House. He wished to know if it was lawful to discriminate in the use of corporate property between one class of ratepayers and another. Was that possible under the existing law? It was most unreasonable that any such power should belong to a municipal Corporation.

MR. DILLON: Section 5 says the Corporation shall have power to let the premises from time to time for such purposes and on such terms as they may think proper. They are to be the judges of the purposes.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that clause seemed to be an additional reason for moving this Instruction, and he felt bound to support it unless it could be shown that according to law it was not necessary. He thought the Attorney General ought to make it clear whether this Bill, if passed, would allow the Belfast Corporation to discriminate between Catholics and Protestants or between Nationalists and Unionists as to the use of this hall.

(4.37.) MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said he was sorry that he could not give the right hon. Gentleman the assurance he asked for. He could, however, give the House this assurance. He knew from the legal adviser of the Corporation

of Belfast that it would be quite impossible for the Corporation to discriminate between the various classes of ratepayers, and if such discrimination did occur the ratepayers had the remedy against the Corporation. The House, however, had to consider whether any case had been made out for discrimination between the Corporation of Belfast and any other Corporation in the United Kingdom. What was really the object of the Instruction which had been moved by the hon. Member for East Mayo? It would place a compulsion on the Corporation of Belfast, which no other Corporation was under in the United Kingdom, to let this hall to any ratepayers who applied for it. Let him give an illustration as to how that might place the Corporation in a very great difficulty. Take the case in which the hon. Member for Waterford and his friends went down from Belfast, and were unable to obtain the use of the Ulster Hall. It was then private property. The friends of the hon. Member for Waterford who applied for the use of that hall were not in a position to enter into the security which was required by the proprietors of the hall. who did not regard them as sufficient security. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Every hall in the country was let under certain conditions of security. The proprietors of the Ulster Hall said, "We are prepared to let you have the use of the hall for £100." This was only an alternative way of getting hold of a certain sum of money as security; and because the persons connected with the meeting which the hon. Member for Waterford wished to address were not considered to be sufficient security for £100, the hall was refused to them.

MR. DILLON: They asked £100 for the use of the hall for the night. The regular price is only £15.

MR. MACARTNEY said he did not in the least accuse the hon. Gentleman of making a mis-statement. He was only explaining the reason why £100 was asked for the use of the hall. They would have got the hall at the ordinary price if they could have become security for a further sum of £100, but the proprietors of the hall did not consider that they were sufficient security. The Corporation of Belfast had had, for the past seven years, the management of a large hall as their own property, and no complaints had been made that any section of the community had been favoured. Neither inside nor outside of the Council Chamber in Belfast had any one raised this point, which was supposed to emanate from Belfast. Therefore he submitted that the hon. Member for East Mayo was not justified in asking the House to take this exceptional course of applying to the Corporation of Belfast a compulsion which no other Corporation in the United Kingdom was under at the present time. If there was a real case of injustice lying behind the case presented by the hon. Member for East Mayo, there would, he submitted, be ample opportunity of proving it before the Committee, and he should be the last person to offer any objection to that. The hon. Member for East Mayo was not even supported by the Nationalist members on the Corporation or by Nationalist opinion in the city of Belfast. In conclusion, he submitted that the evidence did not justify the House in taking the very exceptional course which had been proposed by the hon. Member for East Mayo.

*(4.42.) MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said that, as a Protestant himself, and as representing a very large Roman Catholic constituency in the north of Ireland, he wished to ask the House to pass this Instruction. There was no doubt that under the clauses of the proposed Bill the Corporation of Belfast would have the absolute control over the Ulster Hall, and could withhold the use of that hall from any party applying for it. They were the trustees of the parties who had constituted them the Council, but as long as they were there they were the absolute owners of the hall, and could refuse the use of it to any body or party who applied for it. They were exactly in the same position as private individuals. If they abused their trust by withholding the hall from proper persons or bodies, the remedy was in the hands of those who had elected them, when the next opportunity came, not to renew their mandate. He asked the House to pass this Resolution

because the tone of the hon. Member who first spoke against it must show the House what an amount of *odium theologicum* prevailed in Belfast, and how much that accounted for the unhappy religious and political strife whfch had been for so many centuries the bane of Ireland. Passing this Instruction would be, at all events to the public at large, an indication that this House strongly reprobated the notion that any body of citizens who complied with the regulations for controlling and regulating the Ulster Hall, or any other hall, should not have free access to it and full use of it. One point put by the hon. Member who spoke last showed how impossible it would be for the Roman Catholics of Belfast, who were a considerable body, to hope to have the advantage and the use of the hall, which the Bill was about to vest in the Corporation of Belfast, because it was manifest that by putting a prohibitive price like £100, as contrasted with £15, they would be able, in the absence of such an Instruction as this, to exclude the representatives of some particular religion or party from the use of the hall.

MR. MACARTNEY said there was no prohibitive price on the use of the hall; it was £15, provided security could be given for £100. In this particular case, the persons were not sufficient security, and they were asked to put down £100. If they had been sufficient security, they would have got the hall. The Corporation could not have two prices; it must have one price fixed for the use of the hall.

*MR. HEMPHILL asked if it was supposed that persons animated by the feeling of some of the Northern Members would ever consider that Roman Catholics or Nationalists could be sufficient security for anything. This was, apparently, a legal way of carrying out the object of excluding the party they disapproved of from the use of the hall. But why should not a large proportion of the inhabitants of Belfast, who were willing to comply with any reasonable regulations imposed by the Corporation, have permission (if they were vesting the hall in the Corporation) to use it for all purposes? How weak the cause of Toryism or Protestantism must be in Belfast, if it conld not bear the light of public opinion to be thrown upon it, and was afraid to hear the arguments of some of his good friends below the gangway. It was the very worst compliment hon. Gentlemen opposite could pay the cause they so strongly and vehemently attempted to uphold. The other hon. Member for Belfast was much more moderate in his tone, and, he thought, spoke as a man who felt conscious that an injustice was being done. He thought, at this time of day, the House of Commons ought to affirm the principle that every public building should be open to every advocate of any cause, so long as the meeting was properly and legally conducted. This was only a declaration that the Corporation should keep that principle in view, and if they wished to get this hall, they must get it subject to that condition.

(4.47.) THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I may be allowed, as a Member for Belfast, to add my word in support of what was said by my colleague. I am not in the least surprised that this matter has been brought before the House, because I am well aware that there is a disposition always to challenge and to criticise anything that is done in Belfast, because that city is still a considerable obstacle in the way of some hon. Gentlemen opposite. [Nationalist cries of "Oh!"] If it is the desire of hon. Members to treat others as they desire to be treated, then they should apply to the Corporation of Belfast the same conditions which are applied to other Corporations in the cities in which they live. It has not been proved that there is any probability that the power of the Corporation of the city of Belfast will be abused any more than the power of the Corporation of any great city, and until that proof has been brought forward and substantiated, I maintain that we should not be asked to inflict this disability on the Corporation of Belfast. The hon. Member for Dundee said that the whole thing desired to be accomplished is really accomplished in the first part of this proviso.

MR. DILLON: If I withdraw the last part, will you agree to the Instruction?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think the first part is already included in the law, but I should be willing to agree that the Corporation should make reasonable regulations, to apply to all parties alike. That would be perfectly reasonable. It is proposed to impose a condition on the Corporation of Belfast which you do not impose on any other Corporation. If you tried to impose on the Corporation of London or Manchester, or any other city, such a condition as this, you would signally fail in the attempt. Politics and religion may come in many guises. I cannot support the proposal to make this exceptional legislation apply to Belfast only, of all the Corporations in the United Kingdom. I support the suggestion made by the hon. Member for East Belfast that the House might let this matter go to the Committee in the ordinary way, being perfectly certain that the House can entrust to the judgment of that fair-minded body—one of its own Committees—the task of securing that what is just and reasonable shall be incorporated in this Bill.

*(4.52.) MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said they had had the unique spectacle of the present and the late Secretaries to the Admiralty joining together as happy brothers in opposing this Instruction. He thought it was only religious intolerance and bigoted Unionism that could produce this coalition. Most Members of the House would be struck by the difference in tone between the speeches of the Members for Belfast. The hon. Member for East Belfast thought the Instruction was a reasonable one, but pleaded that it was not necessary. The hon. Member for North Belfast, who was the chief wire-puller of the Corporation, did not give even a promise on behalf of the Corporation that the hall would not be used as they were led to believe that it would be used when the Corporation got possession of it. He found that the *Belfast Evening Telegraph* said—

"It must be admitted that the owners of the Ulster Hall have power to refuse any application they like, and when a possible breach of the peace is anticipated or where speakers whose views are antagonistic to the majority of the citizens are present, we consider the owners are perfectly justified in refusing the use of the hall."

He hoped hon. Members would note that declaration on the part of a leading Unionist organ in Belfast, and that they would deduce from that what were the intentions of the Belfast Corporation in reference to the management of the hall in future. If his hon. friends the Members for East Mayo and Waterford desired to address a meeting in the Ulster Hall, they would doubtless be told that their views were antagonistic to the majority of the citizens. If the First Lord of the Treasury went there to proclaim his views on a Catholic University for Ireland, he would receive a similar answer. He would ask the House to consider in whose hands the letting of the hall would be. It would practically mean that the hall would be managed by the town clerk of Belfast, who he believed was now in the gallery of the House. That gentleman swore once before a Royal Commission that he could tell a Catholic by looking at his face. They were expected to hand over the rights of Catholic citizens of Belfast, in the matter of the use of this hall, to this expert in religious and political physiognomy. The hon. Member for North Belfast stated that the Belfast Corporation had always treated the Catholics of Belfast with the greatest generosity, but as a matter of fact until the House interfered, under a Conservative Government, no Catholic was allowed to join the Corporation or obtain any appointment under it. Since the last Act was passed, the hon. Member for East Belfast said the representation had been broadened and that all religious bodies now had representation. He forgot to tell the House, however, that he himself and those who sat with him opposed that Bill when it was before the House. That Corporation, moreover, which was said to be a model of toleration, and which the hon. Baronet opposite cited as such, excluded Catholics from its employment, and, both before the Royal Commission in 1887 and the Parliamentary Committee in 1892, the town clerk of Belfast admitted that there were only two Catholic employees out of ninety-one

in responsible positions; and he admitted also that only £250 out of nearly £17,000 paid in salaries by the Corporation went to those who constituted nearly one-fourth of the city's population. The hon Baronet shook his head, but between the sworn testimony of his own town, clerk and the shaking of the hon. Baronet's head, he was bound to abide by the evidence. It was also an instructive fact that a few days ago the Belfast Corporation, in making the appointment of manager to the public baths, situated in the Catholic quarter of the city, absolutely refused to entertain the claims of Catholic applicants for the appointment. The hon. Baronet and the ex-Secretary to the Admiralty, and others, had protested against that Motion on the grounds that it was very exceptional legislative action, and that nothing of the kind had been done with regard to other Corporations. But the whole history of Belfast legislation had been exceptional. The representation to which reference had been made was secured by the direct intervention of all Members in that House. In the year 1892 the Parliamentary Committee refused to pass the preamble of a Bill promoted by the Belfast Corporation until that Corporation abandoned its right to interfere with local Catholic reformatories, to the maintenance of which the ratepayers contributed—a decision which was inevitable, but which stood absolutely without parallel in the history of municipal institutions. Hon. Members opposite had their faults, God knew; but there was one they had not been accused of—religious bigotry, and he contended that any hon. Member who had listened to that discussion with an unbiassed mind would say that a conclusive case had been made out that Catholic rights in the management of that hall should be protected, and that the arguments of the supporters of the Bill had completely failed. The hon. Member for East Belfast, addressing a gathering of working men in Queen's Island, said—

"We cannot do anything without the help of England, and you have disgusted the English people. They will say, 'What is the good of us doing anything for the Ulster fellows if they will not behave themselves?' If you have a bit of common sense, you will just drop it."

That was an excellent speech, and he would say to the opponents of the Instruction that if they had a bit of common sense they would just drop it. It was very little they asked, and there had been no argument worthy of consideration advanced against this Instruction. If they honestly desired to have freedom of speech in Belfast, why did they not accept the Instruction, which inflicted no indignity; and only ensured that all people in the city should be treated alike? The Belfast Corporation the other day decided that if that Instruction were deemed necessary by the House, there should be some provision inserted for the protection of the ratepayers. That was a more reasonable spirit than that exhibited by the representatives of the city in that House that day, who had out-Heroded Herod, and declined to accept even what the Corporation were prepared to adopt. He appealed with every confidence to hon. Members on the opposite side of the House to give one more evidence, as they had done again and again before, that they were determined not to allow their public action to be controlled or dictated by political or religious bigotry.

*(5.10.) MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON said he rose only to occupy the time of the House for a few moments, but this matter so vitally affected the interests of the great city of which he had the honour to be one of the Members, that he appealed to the House to grant him its indulgence. It was desired by this Instruction to place Belfast in a unique position. It was desired to stigmatise it as unworthy of municipal government. It was desired to place it in a position of inferiority to the great cities of England and Scotland, which had been entrusted with the management of their own affairs. He confidently appealed to the House—at any rate, he appealed to hon. Members on his own side of the House—not to allow that stigma to be attached to one of the great strongholds of loyalty and law in Ireland; a city which had sent out its soldiers to maintain the honour of the British flag; a city which year after year—he might almost say century after century—had been extending and progressing and prospering in a way which he should be glad indeed to see the other cities of Ireland emulating. Something had been

said about the town clerk of Belfast, and something about the population. He need say nothing about the town clerk: it was unnecessary to those who knew him. For many years he had devoted enterprise and energy and abilities of no mean order to the development of the industrial resources of Belfast. He was a party, when the boundaries of Belfast were extended, to the arrangement by which the Roman Catholics participated in the divisions of the city in order that they might be represented in the Corporation; and he ventured to assert of the Corporation of Belfast that it was as generous, as large-minded, and as ready to give fair play to the Roman Catholics as to the Protestants in any question that came before it. He was an Orangeman, and it was part of the Orange obligation not to wrong any man on account of his religious opinions. Very few members of the Corporation of Belfast were Orangemen, but he thought he spoke their sentiments when he said they did not attach any stigma or inflict any penalty on a Roman Catholic because he happened to belong to the Roman Catholic Church and reside in Belfast. But this Instruction had been moved by the hon. Member for East Mayo. He would like the House to listen to some words used by the hon. Member for East Mayo in Glasgow on the 16th March. He concluded his speech as follows—

"They were disloyal and would remain disloyal until they got their freedom. When the compact was made between the two countries it would never be a compact between a slave and his master."

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is going beyond the question now before the House.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON said of course he would bow to the ruling of the Chair, not like the hon. Member for East Mayo, and he would not challenge the ruling of the Chair by a Resolution of the House as was proposed by the hon. Member for Waterford. He only desired to quote the speeches of the hon. Member in order to show the improper use to which the Ulster Hall might be put. He should, however, keep the quotations until the hon. Member for Waterford brought forward his Resolution with reference to the Speaker's ruling. In conclusion he asked the House to continue to the Corporation of Belfast the power to manage their own affairs without any mandatory Instruction which would not be tolerated by any city in England or Scotland. He asked the House to refuse to sanction the Instruction on the ground that it would put a stigma on Belfast, and mark it out as the only city in the British Empire unworthy to be trusted with the management of its own affairs.

(5.20.) MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said if any justification were needed for the Instruction moved by his hon. friend it had been afforded by the speeches delivered by hon. Members opposite. Every speaker who had opposed the Instruction had given the cue to the Corporation of Belfast to restrict the use of the Ulster Hall to those who agreed with the majority of the Corporation. No one could have listened to the speeches of those who addressed the House in opposition to the Motion, without being forced to the conclusion that every Member representing Belfast desired to keep the use of the Ulster Hall from the minority. From the Secretary to the Treasury they would have expected a statement of greater moderation, but even he had directly laid it down that the Corporation should be free to judge, and he further said religious and political questions were the most dangerous. If this were a case of there being a large number of halls available for public use in Belfast it would be a different matter, but this was a case of limiting the accommodation which all sections of the community hitherto enjoyed according to the rent they paid. It was the property of a syndicate, and as they paid the rent so all sections of the community could enjoy the use of it. Now the hall was to be taken over by the Corporation, that in itself was a limitation; and was it unreasonable to ask, having regard to all the circumstances of Belfast, that in this Bill should be a provision safeguarding the interests of every section of the community, and to insure that this Hall should not be used by one section and denied to another; that it should not be allowed for the use of the majority and denied to the minority of

the population in Belfast. The opposition taken to this Bill by hon. Members for Belfast was that this Instruction was an insult to the Corporation of Belfast, but behind the Corporation there were the people who brought pressure on that body. He thought this Instruction, if inserted in the Bill, would be of great assistance to the Corporation of Belfast, because if it were incorporated in the Bill it would place a reply in the hands of the Corporation which they could make to everybody who objected to the letting of the Hall. What would take place would be this. If the hon. Member for East Mayo were to be asked to address a meeting in Belfast, the Corporation would be threatened by the majority of opinion in Belfast, and there would be rioting in Belfast in one form and another, and a state of things which would make it impossible for those who were not in sympathy with the views of the majority to express their views to those with whom they were in sympathy in politics or religion. The whole strength of the argument in favour of the Motion lay in the fact that the accommodation for public meetings in the city of Belfast was being limited. He was not afraid of the action which the Corporation might take, because being a mixed body he believed their action would be fair, but he was afraid of the pressure that would, undoubtedly, be brought to bear upon them from the outside, and he thought the greatest argument in favour of the Motion of the hon. Member for East Mayo was in the character of the speeches made in opposition by hon. Members representing Belfast. He hoped the Instruction would be passed.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that, from the point of view of an outsider, what struck him as being so remarkable was that so much time should be taken up by this discussion simply because the Nationalists were afraid of the Belfast people treating them as they (the Nationalists) had treated everybody else. That appeared to him to be the exact position. He could not help being struck by what he had read only the other day, that one of the local authorities of Cork was so tyrannical that they would not allow the family of a man who had died a loyal servant to his country, to put a tombstone on his grave. [Cries of name the authority.] He could give the necessary information, but no doubt hon. Members were perfectly aware of the circumstances. The question in dispute did not concern him, but it seemed to him an extraordinary Instruction and he thought the House ought to regard it with great suspicion, especially as it had been moved by those who had boycotted everybody all over Ireland who did not agree with their views.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) said he should not have intervened in the debate but for the serious charge that had been made by the hon. Baronet the Member for North Belfast (Sir James Haslett) against the city of Limerick. Such charges were flung broadcast at Nationalist Members sitting in this House, but when proof was asked for it was not forthcoming. The hon. Baronet had said that no one who was not in sympathy with the politics and religion of Limerick could get a hall there. It was absolutely untrue, it was only when political firebrands came to Limerick that they ran them out of the city, and they would, always would, run them out by the blessing of God. He thought it would be better if hon. Members opposite confined themselves to refuting the arguments brought forward by the hon. Member for East Mayo, and did not make these baseless charges.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid) indignantly repudiated the statement made by the hon. Member for North Islington, which he said was absolutely incorrect.

(5.33.) Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 116.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)	Asher, Alexander	Atherley-Jones, L.
Allan, William (Gateshead)	Ashton, Thomas Gair	Barlow, John Emmott
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud)	Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry	Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)

Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carew, James Laurence
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thompson, Dr. E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudders'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther, H. T.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brymer, William Ernest

Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dewar, T. R (T'r H'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshal!
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hon. William Edw. H.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morgan, Hn. Fred (Monm'thsh.)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm.
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir James Haslett and Mr. Wolff.

CENTRAL ARGENTINE AND ROSARIO RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

Read the third time and passed, with Amendments.

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL ELECTRIC EXPRESS RAILWAY BILL (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).

Read the third time, and passed.

WEST HAM GAS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

ISLE OF WIGHT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL [LORDS],

SCOTTISH EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE BILL [LORDS],

STREET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL WATER BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

HAMILTON GAS PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [LORDS].

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [LORDS],

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION WATER BILL [LORDS].

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

WREXHAM WATER BILL [LORDS].

Reported, with Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RATHMINES AND RATHGAR URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LEYLAND AND FARINGTON GAS BILL.

Reported, with an Amendment: Report to lie upon the Table.

CLEETHORPES IMPROVEMENT BILL.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House, that, in his opinion, the Cleethorpes Improvement Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Private Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

Sir ROBERT GUNTER reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills; That, at the meeting of the Committee this day, a communication was received from Mr. Partington, one of the members of the said Committee, stating that he was unable, on account of illness, to attend the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for empowering the Isle of Wight Central Railway Company to raise further moneys." [Isle of Wight Central Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to repeal the Deed of Constitution, Charters, and Acts of the Scottish Equitable Life Assurance Society, and to consolidate their provisions or some of them with Amendments; to confer further powers on that Society; and for other purposes." [Scottish Equitable Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords.]

And also a Bill, intituled "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Street to construct Waterworks for the supply of the urban district; and for other purposes." [Street Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords.]

PETITIONS.

LICENSING BILL.

Petition from Larkhall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from West Ham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Hitchin, against; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petitions for legislation: From Ashton-under-Lyne and Dewsbury; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Frome and Barrow-in-Furness; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition from Kelso, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bradford; Kirkstall; and Hitchin; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

Petition from Kirkham, for the conclusion of peace; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).

Return [presented 16th April] to be printed. [No. 145.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND) AUDITORS.

Return [presented 16th April] to be printed. [No. 146.]

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 10th April, *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 147.]

PUBLIC REVENUE (INTERCEPTION).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th January; *Mr Gibson Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 148.]

TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February, *Mr. Gibson Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149.]

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented of Treasury Minute, dated 10th April, 1902, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Administrative Examiner (Endowed Schools) under the Board of Education professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2763 to 2767 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).

Return ordered, "showing (1) the estimated amount of War Charges in South Africa and China which will be incurred up to 31st March, 1903; (2) how these charges have been or will be met; and (3) how the money borrowed has been raised."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Address for Return "showing the estimated position as regards capital expenditure of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1902, and the proposed expenditure thereon during 1902–3."—(*Mr. Price.*)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1902–3 (ARTICLES SUBJECT TO DUTY ON CORN AND MEAL).

Copy ordered, "of Table showing the articles now being taxed with duty by the Customs Authorities under the Corn Duty Resolution of 14–15 April, 1902."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 150.]

(5.50) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner are still debarred from expressing any opinion to the Boer leaders upon the suggestion made by them in the course of the current negotiations; if so, will the Government, with the view of promoting the conclusion of peace, now give these noblemen greater discretion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I cannot at the present time make any statement on the subject of communications with the Boers.

Sale of Boer Farms.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the policy of selling the farms of Boers on commando is still being carried out; whether, in the case of farms already sold, he has any information how the authorities in South Africa ascertained that the owners were alive and on commando at the time when such sales were made; and whether he will direct Lord Milner to hand over the proceeds of the sales of farms belonging to Boers who have fallen in the field to the widows and relatives.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware that any further sales have taken place since my reply to the Hon. Member for East Northamptonshire on the 8th of this month.† I cannot say what steps are taken by the local authorities to ascertain that the owners were alive and on commando, but this is a matter which may be safely left to Lord Milner. I am not aware that there have been any cases of the sale of farms belonging to Boers who have fallen in the field.

Rhodesia Hut Tax.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the High Commissioner of South Rhodesia has sanctioned an ordinance imposing a tax of 10s. on each adult inmate of a hut; will he state what sum was formerly collected on each hut irrespective of the number of adult inmates, the amount which the new tax is estimated to produce; and whether the High Commissioner has acted on his own initiative in the matter, or under instructions from the Colonial Office.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. The previous ordinance of 1894 imposed a tax of the same amount—10s. on each hut simply. I understand that the present tax is estimated to produce £105,000 for the year 1902-3. The tax was recommended by the Resident Commissioner and assented to by the High Commissioner with my authority.

Case of Mr. Cartwright.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War for what length of time and under what conditions, after the expiry of his sentence, it is intended to detain Mr. Albert Cartwright in South Africa, on the ground that, if permitted to return to this country, he might disseminate anti-British opinions in Great Britain.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Mr. Cartwright is detained under supervision. The period of such detention rests with the authorities in South Africa. If any sufficient undertaking can be given as to Mr. Cartwright's conduct in the event of his leaving South Africa, I will communicate with Lord Kitchener with a view to reconsidering his case.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly inform us what kind of conduct and what sort of particulars he desires on the satisfaction of which depends the granting of the release?

MR. BRODRICK: I should regard an undertaking to avoid the course of conduct which has brought Mr. Cartwright to his present situation as probably a satisfactory one.

† See preceding volume, p. 1249.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: What brought him into his present trouble was the publication of what was pronounced by a jury to be a seditious libel; Mr. Cartwright, I understand, will undertake not to publish another seditious libel; will that satisfy the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. BRODRICK: The question is a difficult one to deal with by question and answer, but obviously the authorities in South Africa, having had to condemn Mr. Cartwright for conduct which was of a very grave character from the point of view of the hostilities now proceeding, would desire to obtain some means of preventing the pursuance of the same action on the part of Mr. Cartwright, whether in South Africa or in this country.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that *The Times* published the very same libel, and will he export to South Africa everybody who holds the same opinion as Mr. Cartwright?

Soldiers Killed in Railway Accidents.

MR HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the widows, if any, of the soldiers who were killed in the recent disastrous railway accidents in South Africa will be treated in the same way in regard to pensions as if their husbands had fallen in action.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Yes, Sir.

Pay of Imperial Yeomanry Serving at Home.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the fact that there are more than 3,000 Imperial Yeomen enlisted at 5s. a day now employed in England; and how long it is proposed to continue to pay soldiers serving at home on that scale.

MR. BRODRICK: I have nothing to add to the replies which have been already given to my hon. friend on this subject. I am not prepared to send these Yeomanry to South Africa till the Commander-in-Chief pronounces them fit.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the reply given to me by the noble Lord was that he did not know how many of these men remained serving at home, and that it is for that reason I have been compelled to put the Question down in its present form?

MR. BRODRICK: The number varies from day to day.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Then, roughly.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S) You are embarrassing the Government

Remount Purchases.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the instructions given to officers buying horses abroad are the same as those given to officers purchasing in England, or whether the question of age and value are left to the discretion and judgment of every buyer.

LORD STANLEY: The instructions are practically the same for all purchasing officers, and are not left to the discretion of individuals. The question of age is the same for all countries. The price is fixed according to the market value of the animals in each country as reported by the officer in charge of the purchasing operations to the Inspector General of Remounts.

The Kilt in Scotch Regiments.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if, before the new regulations were issued for the change of the distinctive dress of the Scotch regiments, the colonels and officers of each regiment were consulted.

LORD STANLEY: It has already been explained to the House that there is no intention of abolishing the kilt.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY: That does not answer my Question. I asked whether the officers of the regiments have been consulted.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Gentleman asked, I think, with reference to the distinctive dress of the Scotch regiments, which I believe to be the kilt.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY: Not necessarily.

MR. WEIR: Were the colonels and other officers consulted?

LORD STANLEY: In all questions as to the dress of regiments those who will be affected are always consulted.

Registration of Soldiers' Letters.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that paragraph 38 of Army Order, dated 1st May 1901, does not provide for the registration at War Office expense of letters containing money orders; and, in view of the fact that on the 11th July last a letter addressed to a private in the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders containing a money order for upwards of £10, representing part of the money due to him on his regiment being disembodied, fell into the hands of some other person by whom the order was fraudulently cashed, will he consider the expediency of arranging for the registration of letters of value such as that indicated.

LORD STANLEY: The attention of the Secretary of State for War has been drawn to this matter, and he is considering the best means of minimising the danger of improper payment.

New Volunteer Regulations.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state when the new Volunteer Regulations will be promulgated.

LORD STANLEY: I hope that the new conditions for efficiency will shortly be promulgated. A new book such as the "Volunteer Regulations" cannot be got ready very easily, but every effort shall be made to expedite its issue.

New Volunteer Training Scheme.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of calling upon commanding officers of Metropolitan Volunteer battalions to supply the War Office with a statement as to the steps they have taken up to the present time to carry out the Volunteer training scheme now in force, and how far they have met with success.

LORD STANLEY: Presumably officers commanding Metropolitan Volunteer corps are awaiting the issue of amended regulations before taking any steps.

Transference of Volunteers.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that to obtain an authority for one Volunteer in one battalion in London to be attached temporarily to another batttalion in Nottinghamshire, as laid down in Section 10, Part VIII. of Special Army Order of 27th November, 1901, it is necessary for the application to pass through the Home District, the North West District, the North Eastern District, the districts of Chester, York, Derby, and Newark, involving the signatures of twelve colonels, lieutenant colonels, and commanding officers, and a delay of twenty-four days; and whether this is required by the new decentralization system established last year.

LORD STANLEY: Under existing regulations the authority is required of the general officers commanding the districts concerned, the officers commanding the regimental districts concerned, and the officers commanding the two Volunteer corps. This, however, is considered too cumbrous a procedure, and measures are being taken to simplify it.

MR. BARTLEY: Is it not a fact that under the old system there was simply needed an application from one corps to the other?

LORD STANLEY: I am not aware of that.

Discharges from Woolwich Arsenal.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in addition to the number of discharges which have recently taken place from Woolwich Arsenal, no fewer than 171 have been effected during the past fortnight in the Rifle Shell Factory alone; and, seeing that a number of those discharged were men with long service, a score of them having served for more than twenty years and many for more than ten, whether he will consider the advisability of putting a stop to any further reduction of the working staff of the Woolwich Arsenal.

LORD STANLEY: It has been decided to work the Shell Factory on day shift only, and consequently the redundant employees could no longer be given work. It is true that a few men of long service have been discharged, but the selection has been made with a proper consideration of time-keeping, efficiency, and general character.

Crimean Veterans' Pensions.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any increase has been made during the past year in the daily payments to soldiers who served in the Crimean campaign; and, if so, what are the present authorised rates of pension.

LORD STANLEY: Special increases of pension are being awarded to such soldiers. Each case is treated on its merits and in accordance with the extent of the disability from which the claimant is suffering. This information was recently published.

Richmond Park and Volunteer Training.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War will he explain why the use of Richmond Park as an exercising ground is forbidden to any branch of His Majesty's regular or auxiliary forces, whereas all civilians are allowed the free use of the park for taking exercise, either on horseback or on foot, and whether, in view of the restricted facilities for giving practical training to Volunteer corps in the Metropolitan area, and in view of the suitability of Richmond Park for this purpose, he will endeavour to obtain the necessary permission from the responsible authorities for the occasional use of this park as a military exercising ground.

I beg at the same time to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will state who is the authority responsible for the issue of regulations respecting the use of Richmond Park; what sum if any, is voted by the public for the maintenance of this park; and what are the specific objects for which this park is maintained at the public expense.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question, and perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to answer this and the next Question together. The rules for the management of Richmond Park, in accordance with the Parks Regulation Act of 1872, are made by the Ranger and the Commissioners of Works jointly. The sum voted out of public funds for the park last year was £5,030, but there are certain credits by way of receipts amounting to about £600 a year. The park is maintained out of moneys voted by Parliament for the general enjoyment of the public. To allow Richmond Park to be used as an exercise ground for troops would limit its enjoyment by the public, inasmuch as there would be a considerable risk of damage to the fine plantations, rhododendrons, and shrubs, as well as danger of injury to the deer and the wild birds, especially the herons, preserved in the interests of the public as one of the principal amenities of the park. A considerable area between the Sheen and Richmond Gates is already used, by permission, for Volunteer drills, but though I am prepared to consider with the Ranger whether this area might be extended, I can hold out no hope of allowing the park generally to be used as an exercise ground.

Navy Rations—Bread.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the

Admiralty is he aware that quantities of loaves of bread are thrown overboard and wasted by the crews of His Majesty's ships of war, so that in one port alone as many as fifty loaves of bread are seen floating about a ship at one time. Is he aware that, in consequence of the men not being allowed to take up savings in the shape of money allowances in the case of bread, as they are allowed to do for everything else, the messes habitually order more bread than they require and habitually throw overboard the excess on any one day so as to make room for fresh bread on the next day; and will the Admiralty consider the desirability of baking bread for the men of each ship on board the ship itself, as was done in H.M.S. "Centurion," when on the China Station, with success for four months, the ship's galley being used for the purpose; or, failing this, will the Admiralty allow the men to take up savings for bread as they do for beef.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The Admiralty are not aware of the circumstance mentioned in the first paragraph of the Question. The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in respect to the issue of bread. Savings may be, and are, taken up in respect of bread; therefore the reason for the alleged waste does not exist. No information has been received at the Admiralty as to any special practice on board H.M.S. "Centurion," but the question of baking bread on board His Majesty's sh ps was fully considered by the Committee on Navy Rations, and it was recommended that the practice should not be adopted. This recomendation was approved by the Admiralty. In view of the fact that savings are allowed on bread, the action suggested in the last paragraph of my hon. friend's Question is not necessary.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: With reference to the doubt suggested by the hon. Gentleman as to the accuracy of my information, will he make inquiry at Devonport and ascertain whether, in March last, more than fifty loaves were not seen floating round about one ship

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not suggest a doubt as to the hon. Gentleman's information. I say the Admiralty have no information as to the circumstances, and the suggested motive for waste does not exist.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): Shall we have an opportunity afforded us of discussing the Departmental Vote on the Victualling Vote? Will the hon. Gentleman put it down first?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is not within my province to give any pledge, but I believe a pledge has been given in regard to another very important Vote, which is entitled to consideration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The hon. Gentleman says he has no knowledge of what was done on the "Centurion." Will he kindly inquire?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, inquiry shall be made. The commanding officer did not happen to be at the Admiralty today, or I would have asked him.

H.M.S. "Diadem's" Boilers.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state what is the nature of the repairs to the Belleville boilers of H.M.S "Diadem," if such repairs involve new boilers, and if tenders are being asked from private firms for the work; if so, what are the quoted amounts of each firm, and what is the tenour of the specification on which the tenders are based.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithnessshire): Will the Secretary to the Admiralty also state the causes which have led to the withdrawal of the "Diadem" from the Channel Squadron; whether this vessel has been ordered to be re-boilered; and, if so, will he state what make of boilers she was originally fitted with when she hoisted her pennant on joining the Channel Squadron, and what will be the cost of the re-boilering.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The work to be done on the boilers of the

"Diadem" is the repair of the boiler casings, and is part of the general refit of the ship after three and a half years service. The repairs will not involve new boilers. It is proposed to carry out the repairs by contract. Tenders will be invited as soon as the list of the principal items of the work has been received from the Dockyard. It is intended to adopt the principle of working upon a schedule of prices.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: May I ask if this new vessel is absolutely unfit for sea?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: At the present moment, certainly. Most vessels are, after being three and a half years in commission.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that vessels have run twenty years without requiring such expenditure?

H.M.S. "Spartiate"—Repairs.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will say what is the nature of the repairs to H.M.S. "Spartiate" which prevents her trials; when will she be ready for trial; what has been the cost of these repairs; and if this cost is borne by the contractors for the machinery or by the country.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The delay in completion of H.M.S. "Spartiate" is due to the necessity for replacing the Condenser Tubes which were found to be defective and unsuitable. New tubes have been supplied by the manufacturers at a reduced price. The cost of the work will be borne by the Crown, as the machinery contractors are in liquidation. It will not be possible to state the cost of the work on the condensers as apart from the cost of other work until the complete accounts of the expenditure have been supplied. It is expected that the ship will be completed and able to resume her trials by the end of the month. If the hon. Member will repeat his Question with regard to the cost of the replacing of the Condenser Tubes at a later date, I will endeavour to give him the information he requires.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: Is it simply the condenser which causes the trouble?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, that is so.

The Dardanelles and Foreign War-ships.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have any information showing that the Government of Russia contemplate taking steps to obtain a revision of the Treaties of 1841, 1856, and 1871, whereby the passage of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles is prohibited to Foreign ships of war, with a view of obtaining the removal of the prohibitions for Russian vessels of war only, and not for the vessels of other Powers parties to the Treaty; and if any Papers on the subject can be laid upon the Table.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The answer is in the negative.

Uganda Railway.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea, District): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the total amount of money expended on the Uganda Railway up to the 31st March in this year.

LORD CRANBORNE: The total amount of money expended on the Uganda Railway up to the 31st ultimo was £4,982,468 3s. 2d., of which £4,907,239 19s. 4d. was from the Imperial Grant and the balance from receipts from traffic accounts and a few other small miscellaneous receipts.

Teintsin Negotiations.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether conditions with regard to the handing back of territory at Teintsin have been agreed upon by the Allied Commanders, one of the conditions being that Chinese troops are not to approach within thirty kilometres either of the Native city or of the railway, the conditions also containing stipulations with regard to the hills west of Peking and Chinese warships at Taku;

and, if so, whether the British Minister at Peking has been consulted upon and has given his consent to any such conditions.

At the request of my hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division, may I at the same time ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British Commander at Teintsin was authorised by His Majesty's Government to insist on the conditions announced in connection with the proposed handing back of the City of Teintsin to Chinese jurisdiction; and whether His Majesty's Government will facilitate the transfer by supporting a modification of the demands.

LORD CRANBORNE: We have not yet received information as to the details of the recommendations which have been made by the Military Commanders to the diplomatic body at Peking, but it was expected that these would have been submitted about the 14th instant, and a Report no doubt will be made by Sir E. Satow after they have been discussed by the Representatives of the Powers. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet will put a further Question on a later day.

Sugar Bounties Conference.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Papers relating to the recent Conference on Sugar Bounties at Brussels will be presented to Parliament.

LORD CRANBORNE: The Papers will be distributed on Tuesday next.

MR. BRYCE: Will they be laid in dummy?

LORD CRANBORNE: No they will be distributed.

British Trade in the Philippines.

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the assurances given by the United States Government to His Majesty's Government, on the annexation of the Philippines, that no preferential tariffs should be imposed detrimental to any old established trades between this Country and the Philippines, he proposes calling the attention of the United States Government to the fact that a preferential tariff, which will be of moment to the rope industry in the United Kingdom, has been enacted in favour of American manufacturers competing with this country.

LORD CRANBORNE: As I have already stated general representations were made to the United States on behalf of British Trade in the Philippines in 1898. His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington will be instructed to draw the attention of the United States Government to the effect upon the rope industry in this country of the exemption of Manilla fibre exported to the United States from export duty in the Archipelago.

Italy and Tripoli.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government has any information of a projected Italian military expedition to Tripoli; whether His Majesty's Government has inquired from the Italian Government the object of the special military preparations referred to by Signor Prinnetti in the Italian Chamber: and whether instructions will be issued to the Mediterranean Fleet to prevent the landing of any Italian military expedition in Tripoli.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government have no such information.

Parochial Administration in Barbados.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of the State for the Colonies whether he can see his way to direct local inquiry to be held in Barbados as to the system of parochial administration, rating, and administration of poor relief, as well as into the working of the Agricultural Aids Act.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware on what particular grounds inquiry should be held into the subjects mentioned in the right hon. Member's Question, but if he will inform me of the

special points to which he wishes to call attention, I shall be happy to communicate with the Governor.

Incidence of the Death Duties.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that when, in accordance with The Finance Act, 1894, the fixed duty of £2 10s. has been paid on an estate not exceeding £500 gross, and when, on the subsequent discovery of further property raising the estate to a value of over £500, that further property is brought into account by the executors and the full duty on the whole estate paid, or 2 or more per cent. on the amended account, no return is made of the £2 10s. originally paid; and whether he will consider the propriety of so amending The Finance Act, 1894, as to cause credit to be allowed for duties already paid under conditions superseded by a subsequent account and payment.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am not aware that any hardship arises under the present law in cases where there is a will and probate, and to alter the law might encourage wrongful applications under Section 16 (1) of the Finance Act, 1894, in order to evade the larger fees which are payable on ordinary applications for probate. But the matter is a very technical one, and if the hon. Member will send me a statement of his reasons for desiring an alteration of the law, and any suggestions he may like to make as to what alteration should be made, it shall be considered before the Committee stage of the Finance Bill.

Income Tax Abatements.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the total number of persons in the United Kingdom paying income tax; how many of the total pay on the full amount of their declared incomes and how many pay subject to abatements; and if he can state what proportion of the total tax was paid subject to abatements for the year ending 31st December, 1901.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The number of abatements allowed in the year ending 31st March, 1901, the latest year for which figures are available, was about 600,000. It is not possible to say what portion of the total tax was paid by the 600,000 persons in question, nor what the total number of persons paying income tax was in that, or any other year. For it must be remembered that about two-thirds of the income tax is collected, not from the individuals who finally enjoy the income, but at the source from which the income is derived. It is therefore impossible ever to say from the income tax returns either what the number of income tax payers may be, or what is the aggregate income of individual taxpayers.

Yield of Income Tax in Ireland.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the yield per penny of Income Tax in Ireland in the years 1901-1902, 1891-1892.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In 1891-2, the yield per penny of Income Tax collected in Ireland, was approximately £92,000. For 1901-02 the figures cannot yet be given, but for the year 1900-01 the figure was approximately £81,000. The diminution in yield is due to the abatements on small incomes accorded in 1894 and 1898.

Income Tax Remissions.

MR. O'MARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount was originally assessed, 1901-1902, under Schedule B, Income Tax in England; what remissions have been made; and how much it is estimated collections under Schedule B will realise in England.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The exact figures for 1901-1902 will not be available until the autumn. The yield of the Income Tax under Schedule B in England, for the year 1901-02 may be estimated at £190,000.

MR. O'MARA: Can the right hon. Gentleman give me the remissions for the year?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No.

War Terminal Charges.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the amount included in the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1901-02 for terminal charges on the conclusion of the war in South Africa, including cost of transport for the returning troops and gratuities to the soldiers.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The amount was £10,528,000.

*MR. McCRAE: Would the right hon. Gentleman state what sum if any is included for this purpose in the Estimates for the current year.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have already stated that my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War, said he did not include it in the Estimates for the current year.

New Budget Proposals—Increase of Stamp Duties.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state how much he anticipates to collect from Ireland, England, and Scotland, respectively, by the increase proposed in the stamp duties.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: On the basis of the figures for the existing duty the increase may, by way of estimate, be distributed thus:—

England	£434,000
Scotland	39,000
Ireland	27,000
	£500,000

Adhesive Stamps on Cheques.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that cheques drawn on paper which has not an embossed stamp, but to which an ordinary adhesive stamp has been attached, are sometimes returned, after being cashed, without the adhesive stamp being obliterated; and whether the obligation to obliterate the stamp lies with the drawer of the cheque or with the banker.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Under the provisions of Section 34, sub-Section (1) of the Stamp Act, 1891, the drawer of a cheque stamped by means of an adhesive stamp is the person with whom lies the responsibility for obliterating the stamp. Unless he does so the cheque is not to be deemed duly stamped. I have no knowledge of the extent to which there may be failure to observe the law in this respect.

New Customs Duties.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the proposals of the Government to tax all kinds of imported grain and flour include linseed and cotton-seed cakes.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not proposed to include linseed and cotton-seed in the list of articles liable to the new duty, and linseed and cotton-seed cake would be similarly excluded, provided no dutiable article is used in the manufacture.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether imported corn used in the United Kingdom for distillation purposes will be exempted from the new Customs duties in the same manner as molasses are exempt from the sugar duties when used in distillation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, E., Toxteth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether locust beans, which are low-priced articles chiefly used in the manufacture of cake for fattening cattle, fall within the terms of the Resolution.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the customs import duty of 3d. per cwt. on grain will be refunded on all grain used for distillation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have already answered that Question.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: Is it intended that grain so used shall pay customs as well as excise duty.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state what goods are included under the heading of grains, and flours, and meals; and whether it includes all cereals such as peas, haricots, lentils, rice, and also manufactured goods, such as macaroni, semolina, starch, tapioca, sago, and arrowroot. Will he also say whether bran is subject to duty.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The articles specified in the Question are included. I answered the hon. Member's Question the other day,† and I do not know why he puts it again.

MR. LOUGH: Because the right hon. Gentleman complained that he had no notice.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Perhaps it will save trouble if I undertake to lay on the Table a schedule setting forth these particulars.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: May I ask why rice is included on this occasion, whereas it was not included before.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: We propose to tax rice because rice is a grain.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It was not taxed on the former occasion.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is true that it was not included for taxation in the schedule of the Act of 1860, but it was taxed up to that time.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether linseed, cotton seed, rape, and other seeds, will be included under the Corn, etc., Resolution.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not in contemplation to include linseed, cotton-seed, and rape-seed, in the list of articles chargeable with the new duty.

† See page 282.

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether *bonâ fide* contracts entered into some time ago and cargoes afloat will be exempt from the duty on corn; and, if not, will seller or buyer be liable on sales made on conditions termed delivered into warehouse.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The answer to this question is No. The position of grain contracts is precisely that of sugar contracts last year, and the matter is governed by Section 10 of the Finance Act of last year.

MR. O'MARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to place a countervailing duty on foreign beef and pork to enable the British farmer to compete with beef and pork fed on untaxed grain.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir. The British farmer can easily feed his stock with home grown grain if he prefers it.

Grain and Flour Imports to Ireland.

MR. O'MARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state how many hundredweights of grain and flour respectively were imported into Ireland during the last financial year.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The amounts imported were—Grain, 16,294,030 cwts.; flour, 2,386,610 cwts.

Bank Note Forgeries.

MR. HOLLAND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the recent bank note forgeries, he will have some of the spurious notes placed in the library, in order to afford Members an opportunity of inspecting them.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I have no means of giving effect to the hon. Member's suggestion, nor do I think that if I had it would be desirable to do so.

Automatic Gambling Machines.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has considered the case of a boy, sentenced on Tuesday for embezzling 8s. for use in an automatic gambling machine; and whether he will take steps, by ordering special action by the police, and by the public prosecutor, or if necessary, by legislation, to put a stop to the temptations thus placed in the way of young persons and others.

MR. RITCHIE: I said in reply to a Question on this subject on the 13th of last month, that the keeping of these machines had been the subject of action by the police. Since that date there have been at least two prosecutions by the Commissioner of Police, resulting in the conviction of the defendants, but in one of them the magistrate agreed to state a case for the consideration of the High Court. The matter is therefore *sub judice*. I can only say that, if the present law should be found inadequate, I will take care that the question of further measures to deal with this pernicious evil, shall receive consideration.

Established Church (Livings and Population) Returns.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWENS (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as Church Estates Commissioner, whether he will grant the Returns relating to the Established Church of England and Wales, notices for which stand on today's Paper.†

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): This Question is one which should not be addressed, in the first instance, to the Ecclesiastical Commission, but to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The Church Property Return of 1887 cost £4,000, and took four years to prepare, and a substantial part of the cost was provided by the Home Office. The information sought is not in the possession of the Commission, and the Commissioners have not the means of obtaining it on the lines suggested in the Question. The hon. Member can find much of the information which he desires to obtain, in such publications as "Crockford," "The Clergy List," and "The Official Year-Book of the Church of England." I am unwilling to move the Commissioners to incur the large expense of preparing these Returns, which would throw great labour upon an already fully-employed staff.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: May I ask how far the Ecclesiastical Commissioners consider that the information contained in the suggested publications can be treated as official?

MR. LEES KNOWLES: They cannot be relied on entirely, as they are not the Returns of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Richard Cloudesley Charity.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the trustees of the Richard Cloudesley Charity have expressed to him their approval of his proposals for the distribution of the annual income of the Charity; whether the trustees have prepared their scheme, and when will it be presented to the High Court of Justice; and, if not, can he explain the cause of the delay; and

† The following are the Returns referred to:—"Return showing the number of Livings in the Established Church of England and Wales of which (a) the Population exceeds 10,000 and the annual net income, as defined by The Incumbents' Resignation Act, 1887, section 5, exceeds £1,000; (b) the Population exceeds 8,000, but not 10,000, and the annual net income exceeds £800; (c) the Population exceeds 7,000, but not 8,000, and the annual net income exceeds £700; (d) the Population exceeds 6,000, but not 7,000, and the annual net income exceeds £600; (e) the Population exceeds 5,000, but not 6,000, and the annual net income exceeds £500; (f) the Population is 5,000, or less, and the annual net income exceeds £400; and, approximately, the total annual excess of such incomes over the scale named."

"Return showing the number of Livings in the Established Church of England and Wales, (a) of which the annual net income, as defined by the Incumbents' Resignation Act, 1887, section 5, is less than £400 but not less than £300; (b) of which the annual net income is less than £300 but not less than £200; (c) of which the annual net income is less than £200 but not less than £100; (d) of which the annual net income is £100 or less; and in how many cases the Population of such Livings as thus classified exceeds the scale of Population named in the Return, Church of England and Wales (Livings and Population)."

whether he will arrange that a copy of the scheme will be submitted to the Town Council of Islington for its opinion before it is settled by the High Court of Justice.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): The trustees have approved in substance the suggestions made by me with regard to this Charity, which have been already communicated to the Borough Council. The scheme will be brought before the Court as soon as possible, and copies will be sent to the Borough Council of Islington, and other parties concerned for their information before it is finally settled.

Lady Poor Law Schools Inspector.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will take into consideration the desirability of appointing lady inspectors for the purpose of examining children in workhouses and certified Poor Law schools.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): There is a lady inspector who visits the Poor Law and certified schools in the Metropolitan district, but it has not been deemed practicable to extend the arrangement to the rest of the country.

Merchant Taylors' School.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the attention of the Board of Education has been called to the dismissal, without cause assigned, by the Court of Governors of Merchant Taylors' School, on the recommendation of the headmaster, of three assistant masters of twenty-five, twenty-three, and twelve years service respectively; whether the practice of the Court of Governors to give pensions to masters who are not otherwise provided for has been in this case departed from; and, if so, whether any reasons have been given for such departure from the usual practice; whether the Board of Education has any jurisdiction over the school by reason of its endowment, and will make any representation to the Court of Governors on the subject; and whether the Board will consider the desirability of inserting in future in schemes for endowed schools a clause giving to assistant masters reasonable security against arbitrary dismissal.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I beg at the same time to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Merchant Taylors' School has ever been regarded by the Board of Education as an endowed school; whether the Governors have the right in their absolute discretion to require the retirement of any assistant master if they consider it to be for the good of the school; whether it has ever been the practice of the Court to grant pensions to masters except in very exceptional cases; whether the Court framed some years ago a superannuation scheme for the masters of the school; and whether two of the three masters who have recently retired preferred not to join such scheme and upon retirement received gratuities, and the third master, who had joined it, received upon retirement a sufficient sum to enable him to meet the annual payments under the scheme.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The Board of Education have no official information as to the statements in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Questions of the hon. Member for the Eye Division and the statements of the hon. Member for Salford. Paragraph 3 of the first Question asks the opinion of the Board of Education on a point of law, which can probably be decided only by an appeal to the Courts. The Board of Education would make no representation till assured of its jurisdiction. As to paragraph 4, the Board of Education have never yet succeeded in devising any plan of appeal which could in their judgment be properly inserted in a scheme.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I should like to refer the right hon. Gentleman to the first paragraph of my Question, as

to whether the school has ever been regarded by the Board of Education as an endowed school.

SIR JOHN GORST: That is the very question upon which the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners depends —whether it is an endowed school or not. It is a question full of intricacies, and nobody can with certainty say if this is an endowed school, until an appeal to the Courts is decided. During such a state of uncertainty, the Board has formed no opinion at all on the matter.

MR. STEVENSON: Does the Board of Education propose to take any steps to ascertain the limits and nature of the jurisdiction of the Board, if any.

SIR JOHN GORST: No. The Board of Education knows the limits of its jurisdiction; but there is a nice point of law involved, whether a particular school is an endowed school or not, and there is no particular reason why the Board should take steps to determine this point, until a question arises on which the jurisdiction of the Board is necessary.

Organising Expenditure on Secondary Education.

MR. McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will obtain from the County Councils of England and Wales information as to the amount spent annually by each Council under the head of technical or secondary education in the salaries and expenses of organising secretaries or other paid officials, other than teachers, employed for the purpose of establishing or maintaining schools or classes for every branch of education.

SIR JOHN GORST: The information furnished by the Councils to the Board of Education will be found in the Technical Instruction Returns presented to Parliament.

Returns of Agricultural Prices.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can now arrange for the official Returns of prices received under The Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1891, to be published weekly instead of quarterly.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The prices named in the Question are only a small part even of the general agricultural prices in Scotland dealt with by Lord Mansfield's Committee. We are at present considering a scheme for dealing with the prices of all leading agricultural products in the whole of Great Britain, and I could not oanticipate such a general treatment of the subject by dealing with so small a part of it as the hon. Member suggests.

Importation of Canadian Cattle.

DR. FAQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in consideration of the opinion of competent authorities that pleuro-pneumonia has never existed in Canada, and the admitted fact that the United States has been free from this disease for three years, he will reconsider the advisability of restoring the introduction of Canadian store cattle into the United Kingdom, so that cattle-feeders can take full advantage of the threatened storage in the supply of beef from abroad.

MR. HANBURY: I do not know what competent authorities the hon. Member refers to, but, in the opinion of the officers of the Board, pleuro-pneumonia undoubtedly existed among the cattle coming from Canada up to 1892; nor do I know on what the hon. Member bases his fear of a shortage of beef supply. There was a considerable increase in the quantity of beef imported into this country last year, and our information does not show any diminution of stocks in the United States. I see no reason whatever for reversing a policy which was deliberately embodied in an Act of Parliament so recently as the year 1896.

DR. FARQUHARSON: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is not aware that one of the first authorities in Europe has stated that pleuro-pneumonia has never existed in Canada?

MR. HANBURY: That may be so, but it is entirely in conflict with the opinion of our own authorities.

Importation of Diseased Horses.

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can inform the House of the result of his inquiries as to the importation into this country of horses suffering from infectious diseases; and whether any steps are to be taken to check the spread of disease by horses which are imported into this country.

MR. HANBURY: I am glad to inform my hon. friend that the inquiries made by our own Inspectors at the Port of London, and by the local authorities at various other large ports of Great Britain, have shown that practically no cases of influenza have been discovered among imported horses since the year 1900.

MR. HERMON-HODGE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the arrangements for the protection of horse-breeders in this country against the importation of disease are of a permanent character?

MR. HANBURY: In view of there being so very few cases that the local authorities have in some cases ceased inspection, I am afraid I cannot undertake, on behalf of the Board of Agriculture, to incur expenditure at all the ports for this purpose.

Horse Breeding in England.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will state what steps the Board proposes to take to encourage the breeding of Army horses in the United Kingdom.

MR. HANBURY: I am in communication with the War Office on this subject, but cannot as yet give the hon. Member the information he asks.

Boy Labour in the Civil Service.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the effects of the system of procuring economical labour for the various Departments of the Civil Service in London, by the formation of the class of boy writers, who, when dismissed at the age of twenty years, find difficulty in obtaining employment in commercial firms by reason of their training; and, seeing that the majority of these boy writers are drawn from Ireland, and have only wages of 14s. a week at present for their maintenance in London, whether he will consider the advisability of giving these youths increased wages and of providing them with subsequent employment after they have attained the age of 20 years.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I am not aware that the training of boy copyists stands in the way of their subsequent employment by private firms. Less than 25 per cent. continue to serve till the age limit of twenty, and of these a large portion subsequently enter the permanent service, owing to their privilege of competing at a later age than other candidates. I think the minimum pay of 14s. a week rather low. It has already been decided to raise it to 15s.

Commission on Postal Orders.

MR. McLAREN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the additional stamp on cheques, he will give further facilities for the convenient transmission of small sums by means of postal notes, by reducing the commission payable on sums of £1 and under, and by issuing books of postal orders, with counterfoils attached, so as to enable a record to be kept by those who have to send large numbers of small remittances.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General does not consider it necessary to reduce the commissions payable upon postal orders, as the present rates appear to him to be reasonable. The question of supplying books of postal orders with counterfoils attached has received attention on many occasions; but the Postmaster General sees no reason to think that there would be such

a demand on the part of the public for this convenience as would justify him in adopting the proposal.

Coronation Celebrations in Scotland.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the Parish Councils in England are to be permitted to meet the expenses of the Coronation celebrations out of a compulsory rate; and whether he will give orders that a similar permission is given to the Scotch Parish Councils, should they desire to exercise it.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The English Local Government Board in the case of local authorities, whose accounts are subject to audit by the Board's auditors, have power, under the Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, 1887, to authorise the charging of such expenditure against the statutory rates. Neither the Secretary for Scotland nor the Local Government Board for Scotland possess a similar power. I would like to add, for the information of the hon. Member and the local authorities in whose interests he puts the Question, that, in the opinion of the Secretary for Scotland as advised, any rate or contribution, for the purpose aimed at, must accordingly be of a voluntary nature, clear intimation being given on the assessment notice or invitation to subscribe that payment is not compulsory.

Hospitals in Scotch Congested Districts.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the Secretary for Scotland has stated that he would not be disinclined to amend The Congested District (Scotland) Act, 1897, in such a manner as to provide for the establishment and maintenance of hospitals in congested areas, will he state whether he can arrange to introduce legislation on the subject this session.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: With reference to the answer I gave to the hon. Member on the 15th March, 1901†, the Secretary for Scotland is not yet in a position to say what steps, if any, he can take in the matter.

† See (4) *Debates*, xci., 86.

Earl of Kenmare and Police Protection.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the exact amount of money paid in salary and otherwise to the policeman stationed at Killarney House for the past ten years; and if, having regard to the crimelessness of the district as testified at recent quarter sessions, this policeman will now be withdrawn.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): This Question is substantially a repetition of one put to me by the hon. Member on the 10th June last.† I have nothing to add to the reply given by me on that occasion.

MR. MURPHY: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the crimelessness of that district has been recently proved by the presentation of white gloves to the Recorder?

MR. WYNDHAM'S reply was not heard in the gallery.

Extra Police at Kilmactigue, Sligo.

*MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of extra police at present stationed in Kilmactigue, County Sligo; and whether, in view of the crimelessness of the district, he will consider the advisability of withdrawing these police at an early date.

MR. WYNDHAM: The number of extra police is five. The district is not free from crime, as alleged. On the contrary, there have been several agrarian outrages committed in the locality within the last twelve months, and individuals have been, and are at the present moment, the victims of intimidation and boycotting. The extra police are employed in protecting the persons and property of these persons.

*MR. O'DOWD: Who are these persons?

[No answer was given.]

† See (4) *Debates*, xciv., 1468.

Rooskey (Mayo) Band.

*MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Rooskey (County Mayo) band, whilst out for practice on Christmas Day, was set upon by a force of police who assaulted the bandsmen and made determined attempts to break the instruments, which had to be removed for safety across the county, Mearing to Moylough, county Sligo; and, seeing that the police of Chaffpool have instituted a search and are still engaged in a search for these instruments, will he say on whose initiative they are acting, or whether it is with the sanction of the Irish Government that such action is being taken by the police.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Rooskey band went out on Christmas Day, but the remaining allegations in the Question are without foundation.

*MR. O'DOWD: Is it not a fact that the Moylough men are allowed to perform on that band, whilst its owners are denied that right?

[No answer was given.]

Prisoners under Criminal Law and Procedure Act.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that defendants accused of the same offences under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, have been sentenced in Tipperary to hard labour, in Mayo to be treated as ordinary prisoners and without hard labour, and in Roscommon to be treated as first class misdemeanants; whether he will assent to a Parliamentary Consular Return, setting forth the treatment given to political prisoners in other countries; and whether he is prepared to take steps to assimilate the treatment of political prisoners in Ireland to the treatment of political prisoners in other civilised countries.

MR. WYNDHAM: In some cases the conditions attaching to imprisonment for offences committed under the Statute mentioned have been varied on appeal. It does not rest with me to grant or refuse the Return indicated in the second query. All prisoners in Ireland are being classified as in England. But no separate class has been, or will be, instituted, to distinguish persons convicted under that statute.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a separate class has been in existence ever since the Coercion Act of 1887?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of it; and, since the hon. Gentleman asks the Question, I would ask him to indicate to me on what he bases it. The ordinary prison rules are in force, and I am certain that no special class has been instituted.

MR. DILLON: I will repeat the Question on Monday. I base it on personal experience.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to treat political opponents as criminals in Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is free speech to be treated as a crime in Ireland?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order. order!

Irish National School Teachers' Pensions.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return relating to National School Teachers (Ireland) (Pension Fund), notice for which stands on today's Paper.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The details for which the hon. Member asks are given each year in the Report of the Commissioners of National Education. The latest available Report is that for 1900 (Cd. 704 of 1901) and the information will be found at page 27.

Irish Emigration.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware

that the drain of Irish emigration still continues; and what steps it is proposed to take to prevent the further decrease of the population of Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: There were fewer emigrants from Ireland during the past three months, as compared with the corresponding period of 1901. The official returns do not show to what causes emigration is due.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman proposes to cure this admitted evil by coercion?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Rathkeale Labourers' Scheme.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what is the cause of the delay in issuing the first instalment of the loan for the labourers' scheme in the Rathkeale Union in the county of Limerick; and when will it be issued.

MR. WYNDHAM: The application in this case is at present before the Treasury.

Applications for Labourers' Cottages.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the recent sittings of the Privy Council a number of applications for labourers' cottages were rejected on appeal, though recommended in the first instance by the Local Government Board inspector; and can he state what additional evidence was brought forward by the Petitioners before the Privy Council when the decisions of the Local Government Board were reversed.

MR. WYNDHAM: The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The objections urged by the petitioners were disclosed in the petitions, and evidence of the objections was given before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The Committee, in disallowing the applications acted in pursuance of its statutory powers. The hearing was public.

MR. SHEEHAN: Will the petitioners be allowed to produce additional evidence —additional, I mean, to that produced at the first hearing?

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that the objections urged by the petitioners were disclosed in their petitions, and I infer from that that no further objections can be raised.

Tipperary Coronership.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the person about to be appointed to the office of coroner in Tipperary will be a coroner for the entire county of Tipperary, and entitled to act in the south riding of that county for the adjoining district, that the payment of the salary of the coroner is a charge upon the entire county, and that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has recently issued his writ for the election of a coroner in the north riding of Tipperary by the County Council of that riding: and seeing that the County Council of the south riding of the county is entitled to take part in the two elections, whether instructions to this effect will be given to the high sheriff and North and South Riding County Councils; and, having regard to the fact that intimation cannot now be given of a vacancy in the office of coroner created by death, the twentieth sections of the Act 9 and 10 Vic., cap. 37, having been repealed by the Local Government Act, will he state with whom the responsibility rests of giving official notice of the vacancy to the County Council, and will he see that the person elected to the office of coroner is possessed of the necessary legal qualifications.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The Question contained in the first paragraph is not free from difficulty, but in the opinion of the Irish Law Officers the Writ issued by the Lord Chancellor, is, having regard to the provisions of the 14th, 68th, and 69th Sections of the Local Government Act and the Orders made thereunder, in proper form. The Council of the

North Riding will elect and pay the coroner and assign to him a district within the North Riding. The Sheriff has nothing to do with the election, and the County Council have had full notice of the Order removing the coroner. It is the duty of the County Council to see that the person elected is duly qualified.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With whom does the responsibility rest of giving the County Councils notice?

MR. ATKINSON: They had before them the notice of the Order removing the coroner, and also the writ ordering the appointment of his successor.

Appeal from Conviction Under Crimes Act (Ireland).

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the proceedings before County Court Judge Moore, at Thurles, on the 8th instant, in connection with the appeal of Mr. R. A. Corr against sentences which amounted to seven months imprisonment with hard labour; is he aware, on counsel for the accused making an application that the sentences should run concurrently and the hard labour should be removed, of the intervention by the prosecuting counsel and of the terms in which he referred to the prisoner; and whether the Law Officers in Ireland will communicate their views as to this gentleman's conduct.

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. There was only one appeal before the County Court Judge. In this the Judge confirmed the conviction of three months imprisonment with hard labour. The accused, at the time of the hearing of the appeal, was in custody under a conviction for an earlier and entirely different offence for which he had been sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour. The prosecuting counsel, Mr. Morphy, reports to me that the observations made by him to the Court on the occasion referred to, were made in reply to the application of the prisoner's counsel that the accused should be made a first-class misdemeanant. Mr. Morphy merely submitted that having regard to the gravity of the offence the accused should not be made a first-class misdemeanant. He adds that the report in the newspapers is inaccurate. I entirely approve of this action on the part of the prosecuting counsel.

MR. FLYNN: Arising out of the answer I should like to ask whether, the conviction having been secured before the County Court Judge, counsel had any right to interfere with and insult this unfortunate man's application.

MR. ATKINSON: My learned friend reports to me that he did not insult the man. As to his right to interfere on the application that the accused might be made a first-class misdemeanant it was not only his right but his duty to interfere and give reasons why that course should not be taken.

MR. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it was neither counsel's right nor his duty——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not a request for information.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is a common practice——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Irish Lights Board.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his Department have had under consideration the necessity of reconstituting the Irish Board of Lights; and whether the Government will introduce a measure or support a Bill having for its object the increased efficiency and official responsibility in the managements of Irish lights affairs.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): With regard to the first part of the Question, I can add nothing to the reply I have already given the hon. Member; and with regard to the second part I can only say I am unable to give any such pledge.

Kilmallock Postal Arrangements.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the morning collection of letters is of no use to the inhabitants of Dromin and Ballinculla district, near Kilmallock, in the county of Limerick, as they cannot have their correspondence replied to by that time on the same day; whether he has received a statement from the parish priest of the district to that effect, and asking to have the morning collection changed to an evening one; and will he, in the public interest, accede to the request.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The circumstances of this case having been fully explained to the hon. Member in the answers already given to him by letter on the 11th of September and 15th of November last, and orally in this House on the 25th of last month.† The Postmaster General regrets that he is unable to depart from the decision he has arrived at.

The Member for Galway.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the legal proceedings taken in the name of Mr. Lynch, Member for Galway City, to recover rents due to him; whether instructions have been given to arrest Mr. Lynch on a charge of high treason so soon as he may come within the King's dominions; and whether steps will be taken, by making him an outlaw or otherwise, to prevent Mr. Lynch from using the King's Courts for recovery of rents.

MR. MACVEAGH: Before the Attorney General answers that Question, I beg to ask whether he is aware that three of the noble Lord's ancestors were hanged for high treason.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I have heard of the proceedings in Ireland to which my noble friend refers, but have no special information with regard to them. As has already been stated in this House, the answer to the second part of the Question is in the affirmative. I have carefully considered the point raised in the last part of the Question, and do not consider it desirable to take any such proceedings.

EARL PERCY: Arising out of that, may I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman if he can inform the House whether the Act of William III. is still in force, which enacts that prosecution for high treason must take place within three years after the commission of the offence?

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Has the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman been drawn to the fact that Mr. Lynch has offered to transfer his interest in his lands to the tenants without any charge?

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I hope my hon. and learned friend will give an answer to my noble friend's supplementary Question. It is a matter of the greatest possible importance.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: Of course the question will have attention, but it is not suitable for discussion by way of Question and answer across the floor of the House.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): Is it not a fact that the Percies have been four times outlawed for treason?

Voluntary and Board School Expenditure.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can lay upon the Table a Return supplementary to [Cd. 315] showing separately from other miscellaneous expenditure on elementary schools the costs of repairs, rent, and taxes on voluntary and Board schools respectively.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I fear that particulars could not be got without a very great amount of trouble, and that even then they would not be available till after the Education Bill had been under consideration.

† See preceding Volume, p. 997.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: May I ask whether, in point of fact, these figures are not added up and included in one column?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the Return would be extremely costly, would involve the consideration of details of the accounts of some 20,000 schools, and even then would be so imperfect as not to be of much use.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: Would it not be possible, from the materials in the hands of the Government, to set out the particulars in the shape asked for?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought I had answered. I have not myself inspected the forms, but I am told they are in such a shape that it would involve a most laborious and lengthy examination of the separate accounts of all the schools to give such a Return.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: I shall put down another Question on the subject.

Gibraltar Works.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government have taken any steps to provide docks and anchorage for British vessels in the Bay of Gibraltar, not exposed to converging fire from guns which may be placed on the adjacent Spanish coast and territory; and, if so, what is the nature of such steps.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There has been no change in the policy of the Government in connection with Gibraltar since the subject was debated at great length in this and the other House of Parliament last session.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Was not the policy of the Government as then expressed to send out an eminent engineer?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That question does not arise.

Crimes Act (Ireland).

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) having risen—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said I do not know whether I am right in imagining that the hon. Gentleman is going to ask leave to move the adjournment.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I was going to ask a Question first, and it would depend on the answer whether or not I should ask leave.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I want to say something before the adjournment is moved.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I had perhaps better put my Question first—It is, to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any information to give to the House with reference to the statement in today's newspapers that nine counties and two cities in Ireland have been proclaimed under Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the Coercion Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, the Lord Lieutenant, and I associate myself fully with his action, yesterday proclaimed in Council certain urban and rural districts in Ireland, thirty-four in number altogether, and the two cities of Waterford and Cork, under Section 2 of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act. He also proclaimed the nine counties of which those districts form part, together with the County Boroughs of Cork and Waterford, under Sections 3 and 4 of the same Act. The object of that action was to make persons amenable to the law who have broken the law. The definition of the area so proclaimed has been based on information which convinced the Irish Government that the law has been broken, principally by the increased practice and advocacy of offences popularly known as boycotting and intimidation.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Do I understand that the proclamation under Section 2 of the Act does not apply to the whole of the nine counties, and, if so, what are the districts that are so affected?

MR. WYNDHAM: I can read the names, but it is a long list.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will not ask it if they are so numerous; we shall see them tomorrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether I am right in interposing, but I take it that the hon. Member for Waterford proposes to ask leave to move the adjournment. Personally, I should not raise any objection to that course on such an occasion as this, but it is evident that it must upset the programme of business which has by common consent been arranged for that evening. It is quite clear that if the subject of proclamation under the Crimes Act is started it must last some little time. I would suggest that it would be the most convenient course if the debate on the Motion for adjournment can be concluded in time to give the Reports of the Budget Resolutions which are non-controversial; and, if that were done, instead of devoting tomorrow to Supply I would ask the House to devote it to the general discussion on the Budget, which was to have taken place tonight. Monday has been arranged for another discussion, but the occasion is one on which the sound and useful practice of devoting Friday to Supply might be interrupted.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Of course, it must be obvious that the discussion on Ireland will take a considerable time. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the general discussion on the Budget on Monday, going on with Supply as arranged tomorrow, I would not object to the taking of the Reports which the right hon. Gentleman desires this evening.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I would suggest that if the non-contentious Budget Resolutions are taken this evening it would be better to adhere to the taking of Supply tomorrow, Monday for the discussion of the Corn Duty, and Tuesday for the discussion on the whole Budget.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is force in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, and perhaps some Members of the House have made arrangements for tomorrow which would be inconsistent with the taking of the discussion of the Budget on that day. My proposal is this—The remainder of this evening for the Motion for the adjournment of the House, and the Reports of the non-controversial Resolutions; tomorrow, Supply, as arranged; on Monday, the general discussion on the Budget, and on Tuesday, the discussion on the Corn Resolutions, together with the Report stage of the Income Tax Resolution.

MR. LOUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman not keep over the Resolution on Stamps?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I should like to point out that the stamp duty is a very controversial question.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the House will agree to take the Resolution tonight, as I have promised to look into the matter and see what can be done, though I cannot make any announcement till the Report is taken.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think the arrangement suggested by the Leader of the House a very reasonable one.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND)—PROCLAMATION.

[Motion for Adjournment.]

(6.55) MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford), rose in his place, and asked leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the proclamation of nine counties and two cities in Ireland under Sections 2, 3, and 4 of The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887;" and the pleasure of the House having been signified—

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The action of the Irish Executive to which I desire to call the attention of the House is of a very grave and serious character indeed, and I desire to address myself to its consideration in a spirit of gravity. I do not intend, Mr. Speaker, to make any violent attack or to indulge in any extravagant criticism. I regard the step which has been taken

as one of the utmost gravity, affecting most prejudicially the future prospects of Ireland; and I desire to discuss it in a spirit of moderation. I am not quite sure if the House of Commons exactly understands the position in which Ireland has been governed of recent years. I think I shall probably be quite accurate if I say that since the Union Ireland has never been governed without the application of exceptional coercive laws for so long a period as the period covered by the last eight or nine years. It is true that during that period there was upon the Statute Book an exceptional coercive law, but it is also true that during those years that law stood in abeyance and during that period the ordinary law of England, Scotland, and Wales prevailed in Ireland. I remember very well the circumstances under which the proclamation of Ireland under the Crimes Acts was revoked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. When he went to Ireland, I think probably he will agree with me, Ireland was not in as peaceful a condition as she is today. When he went to Ireland, a large proportion of the country was disturbed, and there was more ordinary crime and more agrarian crime than there is today. I well remember, when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to suspend the operation of the Coercion Act, the solemn warnings that were given to him by the representatives of certain classes in Ireland. I well remember how he was warned that the result of his action would be that crime and outrage and lawlessness would spring up all over the country, and that neither the lives nor property of the landlords or their friends would be safe in the country. But the right hon. Gentleman very wisely believed in the great principle which he went to Ireland to establish, and he very wisely put those warnings upon one side and re-affirmed the right of the Irish people to live under the ordinary law, and he trusted to the ordinary law. The result was that for a period of years afterwards Ireland lived in comparative peace under the ordinary law, and when the present Chief Secretary for Ireland went to take the reins of government in Ireland in his hands, he found a country which he stated himself at the commencement of this year was freer from agrarian crime than it had been at any period during the past century. That has been the condition of things for the past eight or nine years in Ireland, but now the Government have come to a very serious and grave determination. They have entered upon an entirely new policy in Ireland. They have put upon one side all hope of governing Ireland under the same law that prevails in England, Scotland, and Wales; and they come down to this House, and once again they make the confession that they can only govern Ireland by suspending in that country those portions of the British constitution which are valued and most treasured by the people of this country.

It is not that the right hon. Gentleman is simply dabbling in coercion—that was the case up to yesterday. Up to yesterday he was trying his hand in that timid and tentative way with certain portions of the Coercion Act, but the step he has taken now is a reversal of that policy, and an adoption to the full of that quality of coercion which has been the cause of untold misery in the past, and which I think is the greatest blot, from England's point of view, upon the history of the last century. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that he has proclaimed under certain portions of the Coercion Act nine counties of Ireland—Cavan, Clare, Cork, Leitrim, Mayo, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford, and Roscommon; and in addition to that he has proclaimed the two important cities of Cork and Waterford. He has included in his proclamation nine counties and two cities, containing, roughly speaking, a population of about 1,500,000 people. He has proclaimed most of these counties—I gather from what he said, for he has not read the list, and perhaps he will do so before the debate ends—he has proclaimed most of these counties under the second section of the Coercion Act. That second section provides for the abolition for the time being all over the district of the right of trial by jury in a certain class of offence. The classes of offence for which trial by jury has been abolished are just those very classes of cases in which, for the protection of the liberty of the subject, trial by jury is most necessary. Any

one acquainted with the criminal law or with the administration of the criminal law knows perfectly well that in the whole of the criminal law there is no part so dangerous to the liberty of the subject as the law of conspiracy. The law of conspiracy might be made an engine of the most appalling injustice and tyranny if in the hands of a tyrannical or unscrupulous Government. Under the law of conspiracy, as the House well knows, men are arraigned and held responsible not merely for their own acts and words and writings, but for the words and acts and writings of other people who may be brought into the indictment with them, but for whose words or acts or writings they in reality are not morally responsible at all. There is no portion of the criminal law so dangerous to the liberty of the subject as this law of conspiracy, and I take leave to say that in past days, as every student of English constitutional history knows, it was alone the constancy, the fortitude, and the courage of English jurors which in the past saved the liberty of the subject in this country. Therefore, you are suspending, over this population of 1,500,000 in Ireland, the right of trial by jury in those very cases where the right of trial by jury is most essential for the liberty of the subject. You are suspending it also in case of conspiracy for unlawful assembly, which, as the House has gathered from some of the earlier debates this session upon the subject of Ireland, is also a class of offence where, in order to protect the right of individuals and freedom of speech, trial by jury ought to be scrupulously maintained. We had the most extraordinary doctrines laid down upon unlawful assembly in the last debate in this House, where it was actually held that a man was rightly convicted who came to a meeting which was peaceful and at which meeting he had made a perfectly legal speech—such a man was held to be rightly convicted because of a few phrases in the speech of another man who spoke after him, and during whose speech he may not have been present at all. That is the second class of offence—where the right of trial by jury is almost the sole bulwark of free speech and of the liberty of the individual. Over this vast population of 1,500,000 people you are suspending the right of trial by jury in that class of case also. You are suspending the right of trial by jury in offences of intimidation and in offences which in this country, if they arose in connection with Trade Union disputes, could only be tried before a jury. I hold the view very strongly that the tenantry of Ireland in this land struggle are engaged in a great Trade Union contest, and if men in the course of that contest are to be tried for intimidation, they should be tried under the same conditions as Trade Unionists in this country would be tried if they were charged with intimidation. And, finally, under this proclamation trial by jury will be abolished in all cases of what is called incitement to any of the offences that have been named. I say it would be impossible to conceive a set of offences for which trial by jury is more necessary, and yet you have with one scratch of your pen abolished it. The minor sections of the Acts which have been applied to these districts are Sections 3 and 4. Section 3 enables certain offences to be tried by special juries instead of ordinary juries—that is, by selected juries of men drawn from a class who are likely to be prejudiced against the agrarian offender. Section 4 provides for a change of venue. I can understand some case being made out of this kind: I can imagine a man charged with an offence in connection with the land movement in which the sympathies of the people are with him even if he may have outstepped the law. In all cases of that kind it might be difficult to get a fair trial in the man's own district. I could understand in such a case cause having been shown that there might be some power necessary to change the venue from one district to another. But as I recollect the words of Section 4, it provides that this change of venue is not to rest merely with the Court at all, but with the Attorney General. Section 4 provides that the High Court, on an application by or on behalf of the Attorney General, and upon his certificate that he believes a more impartial and fairer trial can be had, that the Court shall make an order changing the venue. The Court has no power at all in the matter. It is not the case of the

Mr. John Redmond.

Attorney General going to the Court and making out a strong case that the trial ought to be taken to another district; but it is the case of the Attorney General selecting any venue he likes, and the Court is obliged to accept his choice. I will put an extreme case. The Attorney General, under the operation of this section, if he chose, could take a prisoner from Cork or Kerry and give a certificate that he thought a fairer trial would be had in Belfast; and thereupon, notwithstanding that the Court might have the strongest opinion that it was a monstrously unfair thing to send the case to Belfast, although they might be of this opinion, and yet agree that the venue ought to be changed from Cork or Kerry, the Court would have no alternative but to change the venue from Cork to Belfast.

I think, Sir, that I have said enough to show the magnitude of the step the Government have taken. First of all, I have shown its magnitude, with regard to the area of the country affected and to the large population affected, and more especially its magnitude, by reference to the extraordinary powers they are investing in their own servants the paid removable resident magistrates of the country, who are in future to be allowed to try these difficult cases under the criminal law. It is a strange thing that these outbreaks of coercion are nearly always coincident with some event of special interest and importance to the Empire. It is a strange thing that whenever some great event arises upon which the eyes of the world are centred, some great event when English statesmen desire to show to the world a spectacle of loyalty, of unity, of peace, and of the prosperity of their great Empire, that these are the occasions upon which coercion is invariably revived in Ireland. The House perhaps will remember that this Coercion Act was passed in the Jubilee year of 1887. Ireland was then invited, having received this gift from the Imperial Parliament, of the suspension of the constitution to take part with the rest of the Empire in an exhibition of goodwill and loyalty and contentment here in London. In the Jubilee procession which took place, Ireland was most appropriately represented by nobody at all except a squad of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Now, Sir, a new reign has commenced—a new monarch has come to the throne. The Empire once again, and everybody in this country, is insisting that an exhibition should be made in the streets of London of the unity, the loyalty, the contentment, and the goodwill of the sons of the Empire. From every part of the world they are going to flock into London—from Canada and from Australia, and, I suppose, even from the Cape. I do not know whether we will have any representatives from the new Colonies, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies as they are called; but the Sons of the Empire are being invited from every part of the World to come and make a great pageant in the streets of London on the occasion of the Coronation of King Edward VII., in order to show to the nations of the civilised world how strong and united the Empire is, and how peaceful and contented and loyal are the subjects of the King. And, by way of preparation, the constitution is suspended in Ireland, and once again those Canadian statesmen who come from their contented home-rule governed Colony of Canada, and the Australian statesmen who come here, will find one figure absent from your pageant. They will find Ireland, whose goodwill is of more value to this Empire than all the Colonies put together, standing apart from the ceremony, sullen and disaffected, and they will see her represented once again in your pageant by the bayonets and the muskets of the Royal Irish Constabulary. It is a strange thing that these outbreaks of coercion invariably come at periods such as this. Some justification surely is needed for the action of the Government.

Sir, I am enabled by the indulgence of the House to raise this question in a form which is somewhat irregular, and certainly is not a recognised form, and is one which is not popular with the House. We ought not to be put to such expedients at all. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or the Leader of the House, perhaps, ought to have come down and made this announcement to the House, that the constitution was about to be suspended in Ireland, and he ought at

once, when announcing a fact of such enormous importance, to have placed at the disposal of the House ample time for the discussion of the Question, and he ought to have made whatever justification or case he could put forward for the action that has been taken. But no, the suspension of the constitution in Ireland is done by the scratch of a pen in Dublin last night, and the first we hear of it today is in a paragraph in the London newspapers, and no case whatever is put forward by the Government, until we force them by this somewhat irregular course, for the serious step that they have taken. I say it is a monstrous thing that action of this kind should be taken without the fullest explanation by those who are responsible for it. Does it come to this, that the abolition of trial by jury in a district populated by a million and a half of people in Ireland, has become a matter of course, and that it can be carried out without any special explanation or discussion in this House?

Now I ask what possible case have the Government to make? I am at a disadvantage because I am speaking before the right hon. Gentleman, and I am trying to speculate as to what possible case he can put forward. Admittedly Ireland is freer from ordinary crime, according to population, than either England, Scotland, or Wales. That is an uncontrovertible statement. The last time I spoke on the subject I gave figures shewing that, according to population, Ireland was far freer of ordinary crime than England, Scotland, or Wales. Ireland is also free from Agrarian crime. It was only the other day that the Chief Secretary told us so. He gave an elaborate set of figures, extending over a period, I think, of between two and three years, and he compared those figures with previous periods in the immediate past. He showed that Ireland was freer of agrarian crime than she ever had been, and in agrarian crime I am not confining myself. Hon. Members must not be misled by malicious statements in a portion of the English Press on this question. When I speak of agrarian crime, I am not excluding boycotting at all if you like to include it. I believe there is a certain class of boycotting which is criminal and ought to be put down. I think that is the case in this country as well as in Ireland, but I believe at the same time that there is a class of boycotting, called in this country exclusive dealing, which is perfectly legal and perfectly justifiable. But I do not go into distinctions for the purpose of the present argument at all. Let me go the full lengths of concession in order to make my argument. The Chief Secretary, when he talks of boycotting, I presume, includes all classes of boycotting, and what did he say only the other day? He told us that in the whole of Ireland there were only 211 persons who were boycotted at all, and by using the word persons he included all the individuals in families, so that the number of cases of boycotting is very much less—about one-fifth—and of those 211 persons he said there were only twenty-seven that could in any degree be attributed to what was called the popular organisation in Ireland. He was on his defence, because we were attacking him for having dabbled in coercion, and under these circumstances there is no doubt that he would have made the best case he could, and would have given to the House every case of boycotting or agrarian crime he could find in his Returns. He had to make that confession. I ask him—What has happened since then? I think it will be found that when the right hon. Gentleman speaks he cannot materially increase the numbers he then gave, and, if that be so, is it not perfectly monstrous, if there are only twenty-seven persons in the whole of Ireland who have been thus, according to him, wrongfully boycotted by the popular organisation, that he should put this tremendous engine of repression into operation over a population of 1,500,000, and scattered over nine counties and two cities? There is a most unscrupulous campaign on foot in England. I confess I do not know, for it is very hard to know, how to account for the existence of this campaign, but it is an infamous thing. I put it to hon. Gentlemen even on the other side of the House, is it not an ignoble and infamous thing for men, no matter what their station in life, to enter into concerted action for the purpose of endeavouring to create the idea in England that Ireland is

covered with crime, outrage, and disturbance? For what purpose I know not, except that it is in pursuance of the insane policy they have pursued in the past—the insane policy of thinking that, by repressing the people and persecuting them in some way or other, they will be protecting their own personal class interests and property. I am sorry that a portion of the Press of this country has taken part in this conspiracy. Not all, for some even of the Conservative newspapers in London have been writing very fairly on the question, but there are certain papers which day by day have been publishing the most atrocious falsehoods with reference to the condition of Ireland. Every second evening I have read headings in some London papers, "Reign of Terror in Ireland," "The State of Outrage and Crime in Ireland," and only the other day I saw a full-page illustration in one of the most important weekly illustrated papers of London of a most disgraceful character. It was a picture in the background of which there were smoking cottages; in the front there were a couple of masked moonlighters with guns in their hands, beating women and children, who were kneeling at their feet. Well now, is it not awful, is it not absolutely appalling, that the enormous power at the disposal of great newspapers like that should be used in such an ignoble and criminal manner in endeavouring to raise the idea that there is violence and outrage going on in Ireland? Why, Sir, there is not either violence or outrage. Thank God, moonlight outrages are unknown in Ireland. Thank God, there are no outrages or violence, no murders, or woundings, or firings, or anything of the kind. So far as the surface is concerned, at any rate, there is absolute tranquillity and peace, and all those statements are infamous calumnies, and I cannot conceive how responsible Englishmen can lend themselves to this miserable and contemptible effort to drag poor Ireland once more into disrepute before the world, as if it were a crime-stained and blood-stained country.

I have spoken about strange coincidences. It is a strange coincidence that this recrudescence of coercion should be at the moment of the Coronation celebration. But there is another strange coincidence. It comes just at the moment in Ireland when we are entering on the Local Government elections. In a few days time the Irish people will have a free opportunity in the ballot boxes all over the country of giving their answer to the Government. The first term of three years has elapsed, and the County Council elections are going to take place all over the country; and in my judgment, although I have gone to considerable lengths—I have even gone much further, for example, than some of my hon. friends who sit near me—further than the hon. Member for East Mayo—in the past, in telling the Irish people that in these elections they ought to elect men differing from them in creed and politics, in order to show an example of toleration, I say to the right hon. Gentleman now that I believe the one answer we can effectively give to this coercion regime he is now inaugurating, is to tell the people of Ireland in these elections to elect no man who is not prepared to defy this Coercion Act, and trample it under foot. We will see, then, what will be the outcome of the policy. Will you invade the County Council rooms and the District Council rooms and proclaim them as illegal associations? Perhaps you may, and I have always held the view that it might be a good thing if you did abolish the empty forms of constitutional government, and let the world see what your rule is in Ireland—that is, that it is rule based on naked force and nothing else. I am not sure that the right hon. Gentleman in adopting this new policy quite realised that he was doing it on the eve of these elections. I say that the first answer he will get will be the answer in the ballot boxes, and I hope that all over Ireland men will be elected upon this cry—Are you prepared to defy the Coercion Act or are you not?

Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman may still believe that he will be able to dabble in coercion. He may say to himself that having proclaimed nine counties and two cities, he does not intend to put that proclamation very vigorously in force, and that the proclamation was really only a sop to those people who have been pressing him forward on this road of coercion. But I warn the right hon. Gentleman—and I and my friends

who sit near me have had long enough experience of public life in Ireland, and of Coercion Acts in that country, to justify us in viewing our warnings as true—I warn the right hon. Gentleman that he cannot stop, and that he will have to go on. He has now allowed himself to be pushed on to this path by the little coterie I alluded to a few moments ago, and it will be in vain to attempt to arrest his progress downward. He will go on, and I am afraid we must make up our minds in Ireland that we will have a period of trouble, suffering, and sacrifice before us. The Irish people have faced that before, and most of us who sit on these Benches have faced it and suffered from it before. We are prepared if necessary to face it again. Now we know what it means. There is nothing new in the history of Ireland under English rule. We are travelling round and round in the same old circle of coercion—first, timid and tentative; then a little more bold; then going on, the appetite increasing by what it feeds on, coercion bolder and bolder, more naked and unashamed; then imprisonment of every man of responsibility in the country; every man who has power to influence and restrain his fellow-coutrymen, then outrage and crime, when we are in prison, with our mouths closed and our hands manacled, walking round the prison yard with your common pick-pockets; then, after a period of suffering and crime, redress of the grievances we have been suffering. Mr. Speaker, the system under which Ireland is governed has no parallel in the history of the world. We in Ireland are governed by a minority, but with a minority who have the Government behind them in Ireland at the present moment. The elected representatives of the people are opposed to them. The elected public bodies in Ireland are opposed to them. The clergy—at least, that portion of the clergy that represent the overwhelming majority of the people—are opposed to them.

In undertaking this step I am not sure that the Cabinet had the complete and united approval of all the Members of the Irish Government. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will have sufficient chivalry, I am sure, to take full responsibility for not only this step, but for all the disasters that will follow from it, but, unless I am very much mistaken, he and others in Ireland have been anxious to go slowly and to pospone this plunge into coercion, and this has been forced upon him by the persistent pressure of the most contemptible and miserable minority that ever brought ruin and disgrace upon a country. Sir, the men who are responsible for this policy are well known; they are a small clique. In point of numbers they amount to nothing, they have no influence in Ireland, they are the lineal decendants of the intolerant, bigotted, and unscrupulous clique who drove Lord Fitzwilliam out of Ireland in 1795, and they are responsible for every misfortune which has ever overtaken Ireland in the century passed. They are men animated by the meanest and most contemptible motives that could animate human beings. They are animated by considerations of what they think—very foolishly in my opinion—are the interests of their own particular class, and what they think is the protection of their own particular class, and what they think is the protection of their own particular property, and by a motive still more ignoble and contemptible, by the bigotted spirit of irreligious rancour and sectarian intolerance, which has made a certain portion of Ireland with which they are associated a bye-word before the whole world. That is the way we are governed in Ireland. Not merely are we governed by a minority, we are governed by the most contemptible and worthless minority, who in the past history of our country never did anything for her good, but everything for mischief and wrong.

Sir, I deplore most earnestly the new policy of the Chief Secretary. I deplore it because, however determined we may be to face what is before us in the political future of Ireland, none of us can look forward without a feeling something akin to horror to the consequence that, judging by the past, must inevitably follow from this policy of coercion if adopted. If I could I would do almost anything in my power to induce the right hon. Gentleman and the Government to give up this policy, in order that I might save

the judges of Ireland from a period of disturbance and misery, and, I fear, of crime. But, Sir, I know my words have no weight. I know well that people elected to County Councils or to Parliament—men who represent the people—have no influence with the Government. The Government are being driven by men who are in no sense responsible to the people. I say that, while I deplore the policy of the Government, and would make almost any earthly sacrifice in order to save the people from what I see is overtaking them, I will not be such a hypocrite as to pretend that the action of the right hon. Gentleman, from a political point of view, is an unmixed evil. I have more than once said that the one thing wanted in the body politic to make our struggle against English rule strong and powerful was this little touch of the salt of coercion. I am convinced that the result of the right hon. Gentleman's action will be to strengthen our movement. I can promise him that for every branch of the United Irish League he tries to suppress two will spring up in its place. I promise him that for every man sent to prison in the discharge of his public duty in this movement there will be a dozen willing to take his place. And our answer to him to-night is that while we would entreat of him with all the earnestness at our command, if we thought it would be of any avail, even now to change his policy and halt upon this road, at the same time we tell him that if he goes on we will meet him face to face and give him blow for blow, and our answer to his coercion will be to strengthen our organisation and harden our hearts, and make our movement so powerful in the immediate future that his coercion will be short-lived, and that the day will come all the more speedily for redress and right doing.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

(7.40.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member concluded his speech, eloquent as his speeches always are, with prophecies based on political consideration. The action of the Irish Government, which I am here to defend, has not been based on political considerations; and I would, if I can succeed in so doing, allure the House back from the impassioned invective with which he concluded his speech to those earlier portions in which he demanded, as he was entitled to demand, an explanation from the Irish Government of the ground for the action which they have taken. But, Sir, do the periods of the hon. Member, however eloquent, however impassioned, assist the cause he has at heart, or any other useful purpose in Ireland? When I listened to him in that mood I can only feel that it is true that extremes meet, for I find him prophesying and recommending the very courses which were recommended by the most extreme organs of opinion opposed to him. It is he who says it will be a good thing to abolish all forms of constitutional government in Ireland. I do not believe that anybody on the opposite side has put forward so extravagant an idea. It is he who says, "We are travelling on the same old weary round." Yes, we have had agitation launched again in Ireland. I can almost follow every phrase of his speech and apply it to the Party for which he is responsible as he has applied those phrases to the Government. Agitation, at first tentative, partial; at first discountenanced by many men, honourable Nationalists, and discountenanced by himself——

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I never discountenanced agitation; I have always believed that that was the only way to get anything from this House.

MR. WYNDHAM: An agrarian agitation, the importance of which, the immediate necessity for which, many prominent Irish Members discountenanced in 1897 and 1898. But such an agitation is launched, it grows in volume, it passes beyond the control of many of those who first brought it into being, and finally we are travelling "the same old weary round." People's lives are made miserable in Ireland. We then know it is our duty to protect them. We wait on in the hope that these courses will be abandoned soon by those who have taken them up, and when at last the time comes to give up such hope,

we look, not for political reasons, but because it is our duty, for the powers to uphold the law.

The hon. Member began his speech this evening by saying that the action taken by the Irish Government is grave. I agree. I do not for one moment minimise the gravity of the step taken yesterday. It is, in my opinion, a grave matter to substitute summary jurisdiction for trial by jury in any part of the United Kingdom, and in respect of any cases tried. But the evils which that course has been taken to diminish, and, we hope, remove are also grave. We are acting on information which has been exhaustively collected and carefully examined. I say exhaustively collected, because, although I have not been and cannot be criticised on this score by the hon. Gentleman, as the Government has been criticised by others, for not knowing what has been going on in Ireland, it has been our duty to make an exhaustive examination of all the facts which have been alleged. Those facts have been carefully examined. We are taking this course because boycotting has increased in Ireland. The hon. and learned Member stated, as he was well entitled to state, that not so long ago I declared that Ireland was comparatively free from agrarian crime against the person or against property. I did state that, and I made a perfectly accurate statement. But I also stated on the same evening, in reply, I think, to an interruption coming from this side of the House, that I had never made light of the crime of boycotting and never would make light of it. And I would ask the House to recollect that when speaking first on this subject in June last in this House I laid it down that if there were but one person boycotted in Ireland it would be the duty of the Government to protect that one person with any measures which they thought proper to effect that object. That declaration of policy elicited, I think, unanimous support from my hon. friends; but I added a rider. At that time I said that the question of the area over which boycotting prevailed and the general condition of the country must affect the policy of the Government when the Government had to consider the specific methods it would adopt for dealing with this admitted evil, and at that time there was not so much boycotting in Ireland as there is now. We did adopt certain steps. In the first place, we put extra police into the disturbed areas in which persons were exposed to this form of oppression; and in the second place, we prevented by an exhibition of force the holding of meetings intended to foster this form of oppression. Those measures were for a time successful; but, as I said to the House in the debate on the Address, in the very speech to which the hon. and learned Member has alluded, two new features appeared in the welter of Irish agrarian agitation during the autumn—in the first place, the action on what has been called the associated estates, which was akin to the Plan of Campaign; and in the second place, the prevalence during the autumn months of organised open denunciation of individuals. We took another step. Under those parts of Section 2 of the Crimes Act which can be used without proclamation we indicted persons who had been guilty in our opinion of unlawful assembly, and we proceeded altogether, I think, against some fifty-four persons. On March 13th I defended in this House that action, which was, as the hon. and learned Member has stated, our first recourse to that which is called coercion; but I added that it would be my duty to explain and defend from month to month any course which the Government might find it necessary to take in order to protect the liberties of our fellow-subjects in Ireland. Let me do so, and state the facts as they are. I shall exaggerate nothing. I shall extenuate nothing.

I admit that the comparative absence of crime against the person and of crime against property in Ireland is still maintained. I state that there is no widespread repudiation of contract such as we knew in the years 1879 and 1880, and again in 1887, 1888, and 1889. I state that during the last few months, owing to steps already taken by the Executive, as I believe, there has been a marked decrease in open denunciation of individuals by unlawful assemblies. I state that there has been a decrease less marked and only recent, and following upon an increase which gave cause for

great anxiety—a less marked decrease in the publication by newspapers of matter intended to intimidate, being, or purporting to be, resolutions passed by secret conclaves. But that remains a subject for grave anxiety. In many newspapers in Ireland today matter is published designedly, as I hold, to bring fear into men's lives. I have exaggerated nothing. Now let me extenuate nothing. It is true on the other side that far from there being a decrease there has been a steady and persistent increase in boycotting. The hon. Member stated that when the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs came into the office of Chief Secretary there was more agrarian crime than at the present moment. Yes, that is true. But how much less boycotting? In the year when the right hon. Gentleman became Chief Secretary, in 1892, there were but three cases of boycotting in Ireland. When he left office in 1895 there were but eight cases. I pass to 1897. In 1897 there were ten cases, in 1898 twelve cases, in 1899 nineteen cases, and in 1900 thirty-three cases. In June last year, when I spoke, there had been an apparent decrease in this offence, and there were twenty-five cases. For that very reason I advised the House at that moment not to take the steps which I now advise them to take. But that dip was not maintained. During the month in which I spoke—June last—there were thirty-three cases of boycotting. In January last there were thirty-seven, in February there were forty-two, including, I think, 265 persons, and in March last—and these are the last figures I have—there were fifty-one cases, involving 301 persons.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Are these to be described as totally or partially boycotted persons?

MR. WYNDHAM: They are what used to be described as persons totally and partially boycotted.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly let us know how many were totally and how many were partially boycotted?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.) rose; but Mr. WYNDHAM declined, to give way.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has no right to persist if the right hon. Gentleman does not give way.

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not refuse to give way out of any feeling of disrespect for the hon. Member, but a very important impeachment has been preferred by the Leader of the Nationalist Party, and I am endeavouring to deal with it, and it would destroy the efficacy of the debate in which we are all interested if I were to be continually interrupted. Well, the number of persons totally boycotted in Ireland now, as ever, is not large. It is some seven or eight. Yes, Sir, but let the House realise what being totally boycotted means. I have not the figure with me, and therefore, to be on the safe side, I will say that there are not more than perhaps five families who are absolutely unable to get the necessaries of life in their own neighbourhood. But the question asked of me I understood to be —Am I speaking from figures gathered on the same standard? I am.

MR. DILLON: That is to say, we may take it that seven or eight people in Ireland are totally boycotted.

MR. WYNDHAM: The number of persons totally boycotted in Ireland is not now large, and never was large in the worst time—the number of people who were unable to get food unless it was given them by the police. But the number of persons who have difficulty in getting the necessaries of life, who suffer material loss, and live in an atmosphere of threat—that is the number of persons we have to consider. The number of such cases is fifty-one, involving 301 persons. Those figures are based upon the standard which has uniformly been applied throughout the whole of these statistics. If I am asked how many cases there are in Ireland of persons whose welfare and happiness are in any degree affected by such measures of oppression, I should have to say there was something nearer 318 cases of boycotting, involving, I suppose, some 1,500 to 1,900 persons. But I am not urging that except as an additional argument. I confine myself to the facts collected on a standard with which the House has been familiar for years; and I say not so much

the number, though that is grave, but the steady and persistent increase through these months of this evil, so insidious, threatening so surely the welfare of the community, is a reason to justify the action which the Government has taken. What have we done? Under the part of Section 2 of the Crimes Act, which we recently employed, we proceeded against persons who produced these evil results by openly denouncing individuals in Ireland. Well, we have taken powers to employ the remaining provisions of the section. Persons who have been guilty of open denunciation have been punished. Persons who produce the same results, either by isolated action on their part or by secret association, will now, under the remaining provisions of section 2, be punished. The hon. Member asked me for the districts in which the Section is in operation. I do not know whether the hon. Member wishes me to read them now.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I think we ought to have them.

MR. WYNDHAM: They are the rural districts of Enniskillen (No. 2) in County Cavan; the rural districts of Corofin, Ennistymon, Kilrush, Kildysart, Ennis, and Tulla, and the urban districts of Kilrush and Ennis, in County Clare; the rural districts of Millstreet, Mitchelstown (No. 1), Fermoy, Midleton, and Youghal (No. 1), and the urban districts of Fermoy, Midleton, and Youghal, in County Cork; the rural districts of Manorhamilton and Ballyshannan (No. 3), in County Leitrim; the rural districts of Swinford, Claremorris, and Ballinrobe, in County Mayo; the rural district of Castlerea, in County Roscommon; the urban districts of Sligo and rural districts of Sligo, Dromore West, Tubbercurry, and Boyle (No. 2), in County Sligo; the rural districts of Roscrea (No. 1) and Thurles, and the urban districts of Templemore and Thurles, in County Tipperary; the rural districts of Lismore and Youghal (No. 2), in County Waterford, and in the city of Waterford, and the city of Cork. That is information for which the hon. Member is entitled to ask.

Now, I do not disguise from the House that this section is a drastic section. I never attempted to disguise that. Boycotting, intimidation, criminal conspiracy, can be tried under that section without a jury. But I may be asked why we have als employed Sections 3 and 4 of the Crimes Act, and why we have applied them to whole counties and not only to the districts which we consider to be in an acute state of disturbance. Sir, as the hon. and learned Member has himself admitted, those provisions are of a far less drastic character than the provisions of Section 2. They can now be employed in civil suits. But we have applied them to whole counties because they must be applied to whole counties. We could not apply them to parts proclaimed under Section 2 unless we also applied them to whole counties. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said that it rested entirely with the Attorney General for Ireland to secure a change of venue, and that his discretion was unlimited. That is not so. Under the Act the defendant may appeal against the action of the Attorney General, the Court may vary or discharge that action, and if it does so, it may give costs to the defendant.

I have indicated the reasons which have prompted the action we have taken, but I feel also that the action or the inaction of the Irish Government would be open to misconstruction if I did not explain why we employ these particular sections, and not Sections 6 and 7 of the Crimes Act, which enable the Government to declare any association illegal. In the first place, we feel that there is a very great and marked distinction between the trying of persons believed by us to be guilty of crimes—though, of course, they are held to be innocent until they are convicted—and the proclamation of an association, thus making an enormous number of persons potential criminals, and then taking proceedings against them. If hon. Members agree with the Government in thinking that there was such a distinction to be drawn, they will also hold that the Government is acting rightly in proceeding gradually by steps rather than having recourse at once to what may be called the last resources of civilisation when the condition of Ireland at present does not justify such action in our opinion. So much is said and written in this country about the United

Irish League that I feel bound to state to the House the views of the Government in regard to it. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford made a violent attack upon a section of the Press in this country, and attributed the worst motives to those who write in these newspapers about Ireland. I do not think he is justified in imputing such motives. I believe these statements about Ireland are published in good faith; that those who publish them are actuated by real concern for persons whom they believe to be oppressed in Ireland. But I also believe—indeed, I may say I know—that the picture painted of Ireland is, in many cases, exaggerated. I join with the hon. and learned Gentleman in condemning the publication of a large cartoon showing masked ruffians perpetrating crime, when, as a matter of fact, no such crime had been committed. That I regard as a grave abuse, almost an infamous abuse, of the Press of this country. But there is a great difference between such things and some of the articles in the Press of this country, articles which I believe to be inspired by genuine anxiety and true compassion for people whom the writers regard as oppressed. All the more on this account is it our duty to examine the facts very accurately, and to state them to the House. Is there any reason why we should be alarmed at the Un ted Irish League as a political instrument? It has organised the Party which the hon. and learned Member for Waterford leads. I quite agree that it makes use of many imposing titles, such, for instance, as "National Directory." But the power of organisation for political purposes is far less in Ireland than in this country. There is a large number of people in this country whom you may hope to convert to your views. But in Ireland there are none. The two sides are in watertight compartments, and vary only with the birth-rate. Taking the United Irish League as a political instrument, it does not add either to the numbers or to the work of those who are politically opposed to us; it adds only to their war-paint.

It is said also that the United Irish League does grave social evil in Ireland. It is not for me to say it does not. I believe it to be a mischievous organisation, but that is no reason why we should exaggerate its influence, or attribute to the League all the crimes which are committed, sometimes by people who belong to the organisation, and sometimes by people who are not members of it. Take the question of the social effect of the League. Again let me give an illustration. In an article which appeared in a number of English newspapers, we were told that, when the Lenten pastoral of the Bishop of Elphin condemning boycotting was read in one of the churches, so strong was the influence of the United Irish League that the whole congregation rose and left the church. I confess that did impress me. I should consider that such an incident indicated a grave social evil. But it is not what happened. What actually took place was that one man, who is now in prison because he was guilty of unlawful assembly, rose from his seat as if he was going; he was called upon by name by the officiating priest to resume his seat, which he did, and nobody left the church.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: A good sample of Irish news in the English newspapers.

MR. WYNDHAM: I take up that challenge. I believed that story myself for a fortnight, and I feel certain that the persons who published it in responsible newspapers believed it to be true, and gave it, as they were entitled and indeed bound to do, as a piece of information. Do not suppose that I wish to minimise the social effects of the United Irish League. What I deprecate is that the evils should be exaggerated, that public feeling in this country should be whipped up to a state of panic and exacerbation, when we ought to keep cool, when it is the duty of the Irish Executive to act impartially, and when we have one of the most solemn offices of Government and of a strong political party to perform.

I take another point. I read in an article which appeared in a most influential newspaper an account of a very grave disturbance in Ireland. Let me trace the origin of that report. A local agitator who wished to frighten

the British people wrote a highly-coloured account for a local newspaper of a torch being lit and a demonstration being held in favour of the Boers, which a force of twenty-two policemen could not prevent. That account is reproduced verbatim in an article which goes the round of a dozen or two dozen provincial newspapers in this country, to lead up to the conclusion that we shall have, if not Home Rule, separation, and a general collapse of society, unless the United Irish League is put an end to. I again examined the facts. It was a case of a few boys who poured paraffin on a rag, lit it, and then cheered for the Boers, but the whole thing was put out in two minutes, and the children ran away. I am sorry that children in Ireland should be taught to cheer the Boers. I do not think it is a laughing matter. But if we knew the facts as they were, should we feel so anxious as some undoubtedly do feel because they have read the fact as presented to us?

Again, take the economic influences attributed to the League. I read, also in a very influential newspaper, that in Sligo, Leitrim, and Roscommon some time ago there were seventy-one derelict farms. The latest information, Galway being included, brought the number up to 120. That sounded alarming. One would assume that the number of derelict farms was increasing by leaps and bounds in these counties. As a matter of fact, the number is 124. But in March 1898, when the United Irish League was founded, they numbered 226 in these counties. Many people believe that vast tracts of land in Ireland are going out of cultivation owing to the widespread influence of this disorder which the Government has dealt with so negligently, and in so tentative a manner. That is not true. In 1892 there were 1,687 derelict farms in Ireland, in 1895 1.438. in 1897 1,194, in 1898 1,087, in 1899 1,079, in 1900 1,024, in 1901 928, and this year there are only 807. When I am put on my trial, as I often am, for the neglect of the Irish Government to deal with disorder in Ireland, I think I may claim these facts in support of the course we have taken, and I may beg hon. Members to believe that in view of such facts we were right in advancing step by step, and in addressing ourselves to an evil which has been growing, instead of to an evil which has been diminishing.

The evil that has been growing is the evil of boycotting. I cannot accept any of the pleas put forward by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford in palliation of this offence. We are told that the grazing question is a burning question; that this is a campaign between the landlords and tenants. In the majority of cases the boycotting is not directed against the landlord, who often is not there; nor against the large grazier who sometimes takes seventeen or eighteen farms, and, of course, resides only on one. The direct attack is upon the labourer, upon the herd, who works for him, who perhaps has worked for him for six or seven years, and who knows nothing, who cares nothing for your economic theories, even if they were sound, and who ought not to be asked to enter into these debatable matters. The attack is upon the peasant, and the man or woman who supplies him with the smaller necessaries of life. The attack is brought into the schools, and those who ought to be playmates are taught to meet each other in silence or to jeer at each other. These effects are evil, and hon. Members from Ireland know they are evil. I do not believe that when an agitation is launched the man who launches it realises what its effect will be when it has proceeded for several years. The agitator himself, the professional agitator, knows nothing of and cares less for the doctrines of political economy which, whether they be sound or unsound, are put forward. He hears of a feud, of a family squabble—two brothers each saying that a plot of land belongs to him—or he hears of a village feud between the town party, with their dilapidated houses, who have had so little notice from this House or from the Irish Members, and the country party alongside, who have secured so much of their attention and of the attention of the Government. The agitator swoops down with the instinct of the blue-bottle for the rotten spot in the joint, and takes one side or the other; it is often a toss up which side he takes. He then proceeds to organise, and the gloom of apprehension falls upon that district.

People are condemned to misery and material loss, and all the pleasure in life is eliminated. I do not think these sordid pains and penalties ought to be lightly regarded by any one who considers how bitterly they affect the whole life of the community. It is our duty to put an end to this boycotting by any proper means in our power. I would, Sir, yes, I would that we could avoid the risk of confirming some of those who have been oppressed in their lack of self-reliance. There is a risk in coming to their aid with the use of an exceptional law, but we must take things as they are, and things as they are in some parts of Ireland make it our duty to aid these people, even by these exceptional means. It is our duty to encourage them. It is our duty, if we can, to dispel this brooding oppression which blights all good fellowship, which dulls all initiative, which clouds every prospect to which they might aspire of advancing their conditions by honest toil. We are bound, if we can, to suppress boycotting, and tonight I ask the House to support the Government in the steps they are taking for that purpose. I have not exaggerated the case of the Irish Government at the instance of those who, I believe, moved by genuine feelings of concern and compassion for the distressed, advised the immediate employment of more drastic measures; but I will not minimise it at the instance of those who may be prepared to palliate boycotting on various pleas of economic distress or historic misfortune. We do not need to be taught on this side of the House that the lot of the peasant in the West of Ireland is often a hard one; we do not need to be taught that he is descended from men who fared ill in the ruder struggles of earlier ages; but on these very counts, and even apart from our first imperative duty of upholding the law, I say, Sir, for these men there can be no true political development, no sound social regeneration, if now in the 20th century, the weapon of fear is brandished ever before them to cow their spirit and to break their hearts. (8.21.)

*(8.53.) MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): As the representative of one of the districts marked out for special distinction by the proclamation which has been issued by the Irish Government, I wish to make a few remarks on the subject. The Chief Secretary in his speech made more a defence of the League than an argument for its suppression. From beginning to end his statements seemed to me rather to show that the League was not guilty of any conduct or action which could be construed into incitement either to crime or intimidation in Ireland. On the other hand, the speech was an apology for the intolerant bigots who always howl for coercion in Ireland, and for the government of that country by force. The Chief Secretary justified the attack of the hon. Member for Waterford on a portion of the English Press for the reports they published giving a gross exaggeration of the situation in Ireland. We who know the condition of affairs in Ireland know how the people suffer under a system of oppressive government which is directed from Dublin Castle, and we know that invariably the reports that are furnished to the English Press are more or less the production of fertile imaginations rather than true statements of the facts as they exist. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the usefulness of an exhibition of force to prevent meetings in Ireland. Well, the experience of Members sitting on these Benches has always been that an exhibition of force, instead of preventing meetings in Ireland, has always led to the holding of a dozen or more meetings when only one was originally intended. Under the existing forms of the law, the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party are being treated as common criminals in your Irish gaols. That would have appeared to us to have been a sufficiently drastic form of treatment to mete out to the selected representatives of the Irish people, but it seems that the Cabinet Council do not think so, because they are now applying the exceptional forms of the law which have been so long held in abeyance. The right hon. Gentleman made an attempt to defend the Government in this latest action which has been taken, but his defence appeared to be rather a half-humorous exposition of the way in which the English newspapers misrepresent opponents and treat the Irish people, than a justification of his colleagues. He stated that the reason it has been determined to proclaim the United Irish League is the information supplied from various

sources in Ireland. Well, I should like to know the sources of information which led to the partial proclamation of the national movement. Where does the information come from? I say that it comes from poisoned, prejudiced sources. It comes from Sergeant Sheridans of the Royal Irish Constabulary, or the unscrupulous and contemptible minions of the secret service of the British Government. Trial by jury, which is our only charter of liberty, is to be suspended in Ireland. We are not even to have the forms of constitutional government. These are to be taken from us, although we know that in many instances these forms were only mere shadows as far as the securing of justice and fair play in Ireland was concerned. What are we to have instead? We are to have a whole travesty of the forms of constitutional government. We are to have "justice" meted out to us under a cloak and a mockery. It will be a delusion and a snare in Ireland. It will be a system not respected by the Irish people. It will be a system to which the Irish people will give no allegiance, because they know absolutely that it does not secure to them right and justice. The Chief Secretary spoke of a conspiracy, and said that it should be put down. If conspiracy is to be put down it should be that of the landlords, their agents, and their understrappers, which has resulted in the revival of Coercion and may lead to a recrudescence of crime.

The Chief Secretary may think that he is furthering the interests of peace and order in Ireland, but I am quite confident he will find his mistake before very long. Why are we discontented in Ireland? It is because we are ruled unjustly by the Irish Executive, and that we have an impossible system of land tenure. There can be no security or prosperity in Ireland until landlordism is abolished root and branch. I really think that the reason the United Irish League has been proclaimed is that the Government want an excuse to drop their latest Land Bill. Now I should like to know why Millstreet in my own constituency has been proclaimed. I challenge any hon. Member to produce a single atom of evidence to justify Millstreet being proclaimed. or to show that there is a single case of intimidation or of boycotting there. From my knowledge of it, it is one of the most peaceful and crimeless districts in Ireland. It may have given some trouble to the Irish Executive in the past, but that should not be urged as an excuse for its present proclamation. As my hon. friend the Member for Waterford said, the action of the Government in proclaiming the United Irish League will have the effect of extending and not retarding its influence. Does the right hon. Gentleman imagine for a moment that he can suppress the Irish national movement? Experience shows that for every meeting attempted to be suppressed several meetings will be held. I am quite certain that this revival of coercion will end in failure as every other previous revival has ended. You may break up one or two meetings, you may baton our people, and imprison our representatives, but you cannot suppress the Irish nation, and the sooner England realises that she cannot govern Ireland by force, the better it will be for her own prestige and the safety of her Empire.

(9.4.) MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): We have listened to a long and somewhat eloquent speech from the Chief Secretary, but I think the right hon. Gentleman answered the first part of that speech in the second part, and he seemed to me to justify the action of the League he has suppressed. He told us he did not believe in the exaggerated reports that have appeared in the London Press with regard to Ireland. I hope the English people will give ear to those words which fell from the Chief Secretary, and take with a grain of salt a great deal of the stories told by the English Press. As long as I have been in political life, the English Press has done its best to misrepresent the Irish people, and is never satisfied until it has hounded the Government of the day to resort to coercion. On previous occasions, when coercion was applied in Ireland, the Government were generally able to prove that Ireland was at the time in a turbulent state. We have always maintained that any turbulence which exists in Ireland springs from the poverty of the people, and the neglect of the Government to bring in proper land

legislation. But, be that as it may, I do not think that any student of the Irish question will be able to find that any Government ever asked for exceptional powers in Ireland without being able to prove from their own point of view that there was turbuleuce in Ireland. Unfortunately the Coercion Act which has just been revived differs from every other Act in that it is an Act in perpetuity. That Act, which was the making of the First Lord of the Treasury, can be revived whenever the Executive wishes, without any regard whetever to the state of Ireland, and merely in the interests of a small knot of landlords in that country.

What is the present position of affairs? The Chief Secretary candidly acknowledged that from a criminal point of view Ireland could compare favourably with any part of the United Kingdom. I think everyone will acknowledge that so far as ordinary crime is concerned Ireland can compare favourably with any part of the United Kingdom, and I will go further, and say that with regard to ordinary crime it is easier to get convictions by juries in Ireland than in any other part of the United Kingdom. We are told, however, that that only applies to ordinary crime, and that the national organisation promotes agrarian agitation and agrarian crime. Let us see what justification the Government have for reviving this Coercion Act. I have in my hand a Return issued a few days ago of the number of agrarian outrages committed in Ireland which were reported to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary during the quarter ended 31st of December, 1901, being the last available figures. What tale does this Return tell? During these three months in Ireland there had been no case of murder, no case of manslaughter, no case at firing at the person, no case of attempt to murder, no case of administering poison, no case of conspiracy to murder, no case of assaulting the police, no case of aggravated assault, no case of assault endangering life, and even no case of assault on bailiffs and process servers, and certainly if any people deserved a reminder now and again I think it would be these gentlemen. The only column with double figures is the column headed "intimidation," from which it appears that there were twenty-six threatening letters written in Ireland during the three months. There is no column in the English statistics of crime corresponding to that. As a rule a man who writes a threatening letter is not a courageous man; and allow me to say, that if the Irish Members were to prattle about every threatening letter they get at the Post Office in the lobby, the criminal statistics of England would be considerably increased. That column should be omitted altogether. It is quite competent for a man to write to himself half-a-dozen threatening letters, and we who know the action of the police in Ireland are not surprised that many of these letters are attributed to them. English gentlemen who know little or nothing of things in Ireland are surprised that we should make charges of that description against the Executive in Ireland; but, for my part, I can never forget a case that occurred in my childhood, and which is indicative of the whole spirit of Irish administration. In the little church at Carrickbeg, where my father and myself were in the habit of attending mass, a stranger turned up, and was recognised as a very advanced Nationalist. He went under the name of Kelly, and all the advanced Nationalists in my district associated with him, and he swore every one of them into the Fenian organisation. Kelly disappeared suddenly, and the next we saw of him was in the witness-box, prosecuting young men he had duped. He turned out to be the notorious Constable Talbot. He got short shrift himself, and was sent to his long account with very little notice. The Government of that day were aware of his proceedings, and they were more accountable for the infamy of that unfortunate man than he was himself.

Sir, our contention is that this Coercion Act is not aimed at crimes and criminals in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, but at political opponents. Its main object is to break down the national organisation that was found absolutely necessary to preserve the lives of the people in Ireland. It is all very well to deprecate agitation. If those who speak about the life of an Irish Member knew something of the wear and tear of it, they would not so glibly speak of the

luxurious lives we are supposed to lead. But we would be craven cowards if we did not do something to protect the people whom the law had failed to protect. What has been the cause of organisation in Ireland in the past as in the present? What produced the Land Act of 1881? That Act was the result of Land League agitation. What enabled leaseholders in Ireland to enter the Land Courts? Lord Salisbury said that it would be unjust to allow leaseholders to enter the Land Courts; but he and others changed their tune after the Plan of Campaign had brought them to their senses. You yourselves have acknowledged that the dual ownership in land is a failure, and that the only solution is to sell the land to the occupiers and enable them to live and thrive on the holdings their forefathers reclaimed. That is what you are now endeavouring to suppress. I will acknowledge, and no one who knows Ireland can deny it, that the land grabber in Ireland is unpopular and will always remain so. I do not stand here to defend Irish landlords, who, as a class, have never deserved anything of their country. They have identified themselves with the coercion of the people, and for my part I think they can expect nothing from Irishmen. They have always regarded themselves as the English garrison. When Lord Waterford broke up his hunting stud and went away, the cry was, "Do not go, you further reduce the English garrison." But, while saying that of Irish landlords, I must say that they have been encouraged to some extent in their bad work by the people themselves. You crush the Irish industries. In the speech the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary made at Dover he drew attention to the fact that the industries of Ireland had been killed by English legislation, and in corroboration of the attitude he then took he read an eloquent passage from one of the works of the great Irishman Lord Dufferin. But this brings me to the point I was endeavouring to make, that Irish landlords are bad as a class, or they could not revel in the sufferings of the people as they do, but if it had not been for the Irish people themselves going behind each other's backs and offering to take farms from which the occupiers had been evicted, the landlords might not have been so bad as they are. It is the land grabber who has been the stay of the landlords in Ireland, and consequently land grabbers must be unpopular, and there is no doubt that where a man adopts that line in life he is persecuted. It may be said that nobody in Ireland need fear coercion except the law breakers, but I believe this Coercion Act was aimed at political opponents and political organisations, and particularly the organisation the people have started.

We have always complained of the Coercion Acts, but in this particular case we have a greater right to complain than any in the past. I was in the House when the First Lord of the Treasury promised the House that an appeal would lie, under these Acts, against the decisions of the removable magistrates. On the strength of that promise the Coercion Acts were largely obtained. How has that worked out? There was no kind of appeal on comparatively short terms of imprisonment, but appeals were taken on long sentences. The First Lord delivered a speech at Birmingham in which he said that these appeals were very inconvenient, and what was the result? That reached the ears of the removable magistrates, who took their cue from what was said by the First Lord. They had been in the habit of giving about two months imprisonment for certain offences, against which there could be an appeal, but after those remarks of the First Lord they made two or three cases out of one and gave a month's imprisonment in each case. Now I wish to know what course the Government intend to take with regard to the future. One would think they had opportunities enough for punishing men for attending these meetings. They can take them before these removable magistrates, who will do exactly whatever the Executive wishes, but the Government are not satisfied with that, they not only imprison men for making speeches but they baton people for listening to them. The action of the Government is inexplicable; they have failed to make out a case for coercion, and I venture to say that after there has been much suffering in Ireland, after they have imprisoned men for being members of the Irish United League,

they will come down here and do what the League is now asking them to do. I believe that although the people are suffering now, good will come of this action. When the League was suppressed before, a man in my constituency who was not popular in the neighbourhood asked me if I could get him into the League. I said the League was suppressed and asked him why he wished to get into it, and he said—

"It never became active until it was suppressed, and this is the time to get in."

I end, Sir, as I began, in saying that this Coercion Bill, like every other, is aimed not at crime but at the political opponents of the Executive and the political organisations of the people. The state of Ireland today is a scandal to this country. In no country of the world is there so much poverty and misery.

(9.30.) MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.): I am opposed to coercion as much as any hon. Member in this House, but the coercion that I am opposed to is the coercion of irresponsible people who do not allow others to carry on their own business without their consent. I think the action of the Government in putting into force this Act is not coercion at all. Hon. Gentleman opposite talk about coercion in a curious way. The only part of my county in which there was any boycotting was at a farm which I know very well on the borders of Leitrim. For the last six years this farm has been boycotted, but the person who suffers is not the landlord. The people who suffered were the dealers and graziers who put their cattle on the farm to graze. With the exception of one man these unfortunate people were intimidated, withthe result that they took their cattle away and the landlord had their money and his land as well. I do not believe it is altogether a religious question, because a Roman Catholic clergyman took the shooting on this farm, and I myself was shooting next to him on the day he was out. I did not hear him fire a shot, because these gentlemen had been before him and driven off the birds, and put their foot into every nest they could find. I think that some of the things they do are not creditable to any man. Take for instance some of the apologies which men had to come before this "Court" to make. [The hon. Gentleman here read some of the apologies in question.] These people then passed resolutions by which all householders of their parish were to join the organisation by a certain date, or were to be put under the forty-foot pole *régime*. I am sure if I lived in the neighbourhood I should be intimidated and as much afraid as my humbler neighbours. This is the manner by which the League obtains power and importance in Ireland.

The hon. Member for Waterford spoke of the agitation in Ireland being like Trade Unions in England. He is entirely mistaken. There is about as much likeness between the two movements as between a crocodile and a kangaroo. Mr. Arthur O'Connor, now a County Court Judge, speaking a few years ago, said—

"The land agitation is only a means to an end."

The hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Irish Party, speaking at Bradford this year, said—

"In every movement set on foot for the amelioration of the material condition of their country, the Irish had an ulterior object in view, and that object was to obtain self-government."

I do not see much resemblance between an agitation for ob aining self-government and the Trade Union movement in England, and I cannot understand how any Member of this House can be led away by such a statement. I was also astonished to hear the hon. Member say that at the Coronation, when there would be much talk about the "Sons of the Empire," there would be no response from Ireland. I would not like to belittle my country in that way. I believe there will be a greater response from Ireland than from almost any other part of the Empire. The Dublin Fusiliers, the Inniskilling Fusiliers, and the Connaught Rangers have won for themselves imperishable renown in South Africa. These men may be some of the greatest rebels in the world before they enlist, but once they have enlisted there are no stauncher or truer servants of His Majesty than his Irish soldiers. These men will be represented at the Coronation, and will show that "Sons of the Empire" are not altogether wanting in Ireland. I do not believe there is so much bigotry there as some people try to make out. In my own

county there is the greatest good fellowship amongst us. There are three hon. Gentlemen from that county sitting on the other side of the House, and they will bear me out in that statement. I think there will not be the result in the County Council elections which some anticipate. The old elections were run entirely on political lines. No Nationalist would vote for a Unionist—unless there was an enormous majority against him, when perhaps he would make the best of a bad bargain and vote for the best Unionist—on the other hand, no Unionist would vote for a Nationalist; they were as bad on the one side as on the other. But I do not think the putting into force of these sections of the Crimes Act will do any harm; on the contrary, they will be of the greatest assistance to the law-abiding subjects of His Majesty.

*(9.40.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I am not a bit astonished at the course taken by the Government. Over and over again during the last few months I have stated that we were heading towards a crisis that would produce disaster. But the Government, the responsible persons, having made up their minds that this great change is necessary for the preservation of law and order in Ireland, I, for one, will not vote against them having that power. Whilst I say that, however, I must admit, after having sat in this House for seventeen years and heard many discussions upon Crimes Acts and matters of this kind, that I have never known such a step to be taken with apparently so little cause. But the responsibility is on the Government, and I will be no party to shifting that responsibility.

Let me take the case as it was put by the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman frankly admitted that so far as ordinary crime was concerned, the position of Ireland stood as when he spoke last—ordinary crime was practically a nullity in the country. He admitted also that agrarian crime was at a lower point than it had been at almost any time during the last century; that there was no repudiation of contracts on a large scale; that there was a decrease of open denunciation from platforms, and also a decrease of what I call newspaper incitement. That is a pretty clean bill of health for any country. He then went on to say there had been a steady increase of boycotting. When the Crimes Bill of 1887 was introduced into this House the number of persons boycotted, wholly or partially, ran into not hundreds, but thousands. I have not the exact figures, but at one time I have a distinct recollection that the number was over 3,000. I know personally that some of the boycotting at that time was absolutely savage in character. I have lived with boycotted people in the south of Ireland; I have gone with relief to them, and I say now, as I said a few nights ago when the Chief Secretary was absent through illness, that there is hardly anything I would not consent to to stop that criminal and remorseless treatment of people with whom you disagreed. But what is the case put by the Chief Secretary tonight? He states that in March last there were not 3,000 persons boycotted as in 1887, but 301, and of these only five or seven were wholly boycotted. That is a very slender platform on which to erect so large a building. This movement on the part of the Government is a movement of pure coercion. The right hon. Gentleman talks about English newspapers publishing exaggerated articles about Ireland, and he very properly condemns them. But from where do these English newspapers get their information? The main factor in this huge erection of false information has been the *Daily Express* in Dublin, owned by Lord Ardilaun, one of the landlords who have been pressing this very thing on the attention of the Government. Everybody who knows anything about Irish public life knows that there has been an agitation on foot to bring this about—an agitation on the part of the extreme section of Irish landlords, and nobody else. I represent a purely agricultural constituency, and what are the facts there? The County Council elections are coming on; the nominations in my Division are over. I do not believe there will be a single landlord returned at those elections in the whole of South Tyrone. In fact, two of those who are retiring are not standing again, and their places will be taken by tenant farmers. There has not been a single meeting held in my division at which a

resolution has been passed and forwarded to me calling upon me to support anything of this kind.

The Chief Secretary rather implied that this was not a matter between landlord and tenant. That is always the case in regard to boycotting But let me ask for information; I have not the local knowledge to be certain on this point. There is a part of Ulster proclaimed—County Cavan. Does that comprise the district of Dowra, where the Morley estate is situated? [AN IRISH MEMBER: Yes.] I thought it did, but I was not certain. What does this mean? This is the only district proclaimed in Ulster, and what are the facts? Lord Morley—a most estimable and able gentleman, whom I have known for many years, and whom I believe to be incapable of doing anything harsh or wrong—was asked by his tenants to sell his estate. The negotiations went on, as these negotiations generally do, for a long time, and the tenants woke up one morning to find that the estate had been sold not to them, but to a syndicate of land agents. The tenants had offered sixteen or seventeen years purchase of the rents under the Land Purchase Act, but the estate was sold to this syndicate for nine years purchase. [AN IRISH MEMBER: Eight and a half years.] I will not go into fractions. The syndicate carried with it all the arrears; the neighbourhood is a very poor one, and the tenants are largely in arrear. Those arrears, spreading over six or seven years, are now being enforced, and there is war on that estate. This proclamation, in that instance, is not intended to deal with a herd or anybody who is boycotted; it is intended to intervene on behalf of this syndicate, to take by the throat tenants who were willing to give seventeen years purchase for an estate sold for nine. One story is good until another is told, and I am bound to say that the inclusion of that property in this proclamation will be looked upon by the tenant-farmer class in Ulster, whom I know as well as any man in this House, as an act of war against land purchase. It is an act of war against land purchase.

I will not go into the case of the Associated Estates. Those districts are proclaimed, and this is nothing less nor more than a direct intervention between the landlords of these estates and the tenants. These tenants, be it remembered, are not contending under a "No Rent" manifesto. The case differs from that of 1887, because the "No Rent" campaign was then going on. This is a case in which an effort is being made to force land purchase on landlords under a given set of circumstances. Though I think it a mistaken effort, yet I agree with the Attorney General for Ireland that it is a natural one. This proclamation is undoubtedly an intervention between the landlords and the tenants who are willing to buy under the Purchase Acts, just as their neighbours have been permitted, not by the landlords, but by the Government, to do. The Government are directly responsible for all the trouble that has taken place on the Associated Estates. They bought the Dillon Estate; they, and not Lord Dillon, set up the conditions there existing; the people round about wish and are contending for the same terms, and now this proclamation is brought to the aid of the landlords against the would-be purchasers. As regards boycotting, I wish to ask—How does the case stand? The right hon. Gentleman says that he has been able to deal with direct incitement and intimidation from platforms. He says that he has prosecuted in fifty-four cases and he has succeeded in every single case. Therefore he does not require these powers for the intimidation and incitement to boycotting that comes from public platforms. He has already in his hand a weapon quite sufficient for that purpose. The Chief Secretary holds, and I daresay rightly, that there are secret conspiracies and secret meetings where this boycotting is arranged, and where people are incited to boycott persons. Everybody knows that the mere act of boycotting in itself is not an offence, and cannot be made so. To incite to boycotting and to join a conspiracy to boycott are offences, but they entirely depend upon evidence. This is a matter of evidence, and the whole case for this proclamation depends upon whether you can get at the evidence behind the scenes which the Chief Secretary admits to be secret. That is his position, and I venture to say that, looking at the debates in this House over the past seventeen

years, I have never seen such large powers asked for upon such slender grounds.

I have already referred to the case of 1887, when there were more than 3,000 cases of boycotting. In that year the very best results followed the adoption of the Coercion Act. But what came with it? There was something else than the Crimes Act during that session, for there was a Land Act. What was the nature of it? It enfranchised some 33,000 leaseholders and opened the door of the Land Court to these men. It made the tremendous admission that the rents fixed by the Land Commission up to that date, from 1881 to 1887, had been fixed upon a false basis, and it automatically reduced these rents for three years. It plugged up a number of holes which had been driven into the Land Act. That Act went along with the Crimes Act. I admit that the Crimes Act was a great measure, and I admit the good it did and the tyranny it put down. All I can say is that if the measure now proposed had behind it anything like the amount of crime and disorder which there was behind the Act of 1887, there would have been no cause for questioning the adoption of this Act at the present time. But here we have, on the basis of fifty-one cases of boycotting, a proclamation levelled not against boycotting—because there is none in County Cavan—but against intimidation and incitement to boycotting. This proposal is in the main an intervention between the landlords and the tenants in certain cases.

I have received no mandate from South Tyrone to support coercion, although this agitation has been going on for the last month or two. One landlord in Omagh said that there could be no Land Act passed, nor any legislation brought forward that could do a bit of good, until the United Irish League was suppressed. But the agricultural section of my constituency has never asked me to support this proposal, and the responsibility for the measure lies with the Government. I believe there is no real basis for the action of the Government, and I believe there is danger in it. Just as you shut up an organisation that stands on the public platform, you let loose other agencies you cannot control. I am not very sure that the right hon. Gentleman will not be asked to suppress the Farmers' Union of Ulster, but I can assure him that would be a tough job. I know and represent the opinions of tens of thousands of Ulster farmers, members of an organisation ready and willing to support the Government in the administration of law and the preservation of order, but not willing that a weapon should be put into the hands of landlords to interfere with a settlement by purchase. If people were half as willing to reconcile differences in Ireland as they are to accentuate them, much of the difficulty would be removed. My position is more difficult in the House than it is among the Protestant farmers of Ulster but I confess to a sickening feeling as these cases are made as years go on.

Some of my hon. friends protested because I cheered the hon. and learned Member for Waterford when he gave a picture of what was coming. Do my hon. friends deny history? There has never been a Land Bill in modern times—except, perhaps, that of 1896—which came without violent agitation. I cheered that historic fact, which nobody with the slightest knowledge of Irish history can deny. I represent tens of thousands of men upon this question, not constitutionally as their Member, but I know their opinions, and I represent them here, and I can tell the right hon. Gentleman they are getting tired of this oscillation between coercion and conciliation. Surely it is possible for this great Empire, with its enormous power and influence, to take this Irish question resolutely in hand and make an end of it It is a purely agrarian question, it is far more economic than political. How long are we to wait? How many Coercion Bills have there been?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Eighty-seven.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: How many I have supported from a stern sense of duty, I do not know; but I beg, I entreat hon. Members on this side of the House not to turn away from other remedies altogether. If Coercion Bills could cure this Irish wrong, it would have been

cured long ago. To those who declare the Irish people irreconcilable, I reply in John Bright's words—

"I have a belief in justice that cannot be shaken."

So have I. I beg hon. Gentlemen here to study this Irish question, even during the nineteenth century, and they will find Irish Members over and over again have been constantly bringing forward Irish grievances. They have brought forward Irish Land Bills and other measures of the most moderate character, and they have been thrown out. We have stated the Irish case over and over again, and little was done until the Irish people commenced an agitation, and then the English Parliament rushed to do in a hurry what they ought to have done at their leisure. In saying this, I am not an enemy of the Union. I believe in the Union as thoroughly as any man on this side of the House, and I think I have done more than most hon. Members to maintain it. When some hon. Members dared not put this question forward on the platform, I was pleading for it; and I plead for it as strongly today as ever I did in my life. I do feel, however, that this House ought to face this agrarian problem in solemn earnest. I ask the House to look the question in the face, to see how little it would cost to settle it, and by settling it thus rid the country of half the trouble that is now involved in the government of Ireland. I am speaking as a Unionist and as the representative of an Ulster constituency whom I am not afraid to face. They have heard from me these words long ago, and they agree with me; and I beg and entreat—not the Government, because my words will have no weight with them, but the House of Commons, this great assembly which is master of the Government and everything else; I entreat this House of Commons not to allow this question to simmer on until you get into another land war and land agitation and until you are compelled to do in haste what you might well do, and do much better, at leisure.

(10.10.) MR. DILLON: Anyone who has followed with closeness and attention the history of the last six months in Ireland knows that the policy adopted by the Government yesterday in Ireland is not the policy of the Irish Government, but the policy of Lord Londonderry, Lord Ardilaun, and the gang who, with the aid of *The Times*, have driven the Irish Government into a course which is against their own judgment. Ireland is now reduced to this position—that, although one would suppose it was bad enough to be governed for 100 years by strangers who came to our country ignorant of our history and the peculiarities of our social condition, we have reached on this occasion a lower depth still, because we are now governed not by the responsible and nominal governors of Ireland, but by a clique who sit behind that Government, which has driven and forced them into a policy of coercion against their own judgment and against their own will. Anyone who listened to the Chief Secretary tonight could easily have seen by the tone of his speech and its character that he was associating himself with a policy simply from a sense of duty to his colleagues in the Cabinet, and it was evident that his heart was not in the defence of his case. I have had a longer experience than the hon. Member for South Tyrone of coercion in this House, and I have never heard a Chief Secretary make such a feeble, half-hearted, faint, and unreal defence of a Coercion Act as we have listened to this evening. I do not know whether any hon. Members who are present have taken the trouble to read the proclamation which appeared in the *Dublin Gazette* last night. These proclamations, applying provisions of the Coercion Act, which the Chief Secretary concedes constitutes a very serious departure of policy, are signed by whom? They are signed by Lord Ashbourne, Lord Powerscourt, Lord Clonbrock, and by Mr. Smith-Barry. I say that if any sense of decency remained in the Government of Ireland, the names of Lord Clonbrock and Mr. Smith-Barry should not be signed to a proclamation suspending the Constitution.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why did not they get Clanricarde?

MR. DILLON: It would not be a bit more indecent. These proclamations are signed by the Lord Chancellor and three of the great Irish landlords, all of whom have been associated with this whole campaign of blackening the

character of their own people in the eyes of the people of this country by every conceivable system of misrepresentation and falsehood, and have been associated throughout with the policy of the extreme landlords and coercion party in Ireland. We know perfectly well whose policy this is. It is the policy, not of the Government, nor even of the whole Unionist minority in Ireland—it is the policy supported only by a small minority of the Unionist minority itself. They are the lineal descendants of that Orange gang who have been equally the curse of Ireland and of your Government. I regret that the hon. Member for South Belfast, for whom we have a sort of affection, was not allowed to quote from a speech—a speech which if I delivered in Ireland I would be put in prison for, for we are blamed for being disloyal, and told on high authority—someone of the eminence of Lord Londonderry or Lord Ardilaun—that we can never get home government by a statesman, who formerly advocated it when we were equally disloyal, until we are loyal. Well, for fear there might be any mistake about it, I take the opportunity of admitting in this House that I am intensely disloyal; and the Chief Secretary himself knows that in making that admission I am giving the best and most adequate expression I could give to the sentiments of more than three-fourths of the Irish nation. Why should we be loyal? I read the other day the speech of a great lawyer, one of the extreme gang responsible for this policy, in which he said—

"Loyalty is a compact between the subject and the Crown, and loyalty ceases to bind the moment your property and your liberty is not protected by the Government."

In other words, they will cease to be loyal as soon as they are not supported by the full forces of the Government in levying their rack-rents from the starving people of Ireland, people over whose homes, by the tens of thousands, the ploughshare of ruin has been driven by your Government and your soldiers. Loyalty to a Government whom we know only in the shape of your armed forces, protecting bailiffs, and the agents of landlords, who have laid waste our country and levelled more homes than ever have been levelled by invading armies on the Continent of Europe! Loyalty from a nation which has been reduced by the devastating policy of your Government from 8,500,000 to 4,250,000! I heard an hon. Member talk of the Inniskilling Fusiliers. I am proud to see Irishmen behave bravely, even when fighting in a bad cause. The Dublin Fusiliers left Dublin a thousand strong. They came back the other day, but only 300 of them. Although I think the cause was bad, I am proud of them. Last week I received a letter, which any hon. Member can see, from a colour-sergeant in an English regiment in South Africa. He was a Mayo man, from my constituency, and he said in effect, "You Irish Members are very often hard upon Irish soldiers. I come from a ten-acre farm. My father and I were in Yorkshire working to try to earn the arrears of rent, and while there the farm was evicted and grabbed." And then he went on to say that he was obliged to enlist; but he wished to know if I could get anything done with the grabber, so that he might come back to the old place. In hundreds of cases there are men driven out by the tyranny of landlords who are spilling their blood fighting your battles.

Now I come to the case made out for this dreadful departure. I know the course this thing will take. I warned the Irish Secretary, who tried to get us to believe that it was a small matter which would blow over, that coercion in Ireland never blows over. You can never tell where it will end, once you start. I read long ago the life of the late Mr. W. E. Forster. I was in prison—it was smuggled in to me, and I kept it concealed under the mattress, hiding it when any prison officials came in, for I was not allowed to read anything. Mr. Forster went to Ireland full of sympathy and good feeling for the Irish people, and without an atom of sympathy with the landlord class—he went, as he believed, to scatter blessings over the Irish people; and when he was obliged to bring in a Coercion Act, he did not treat it in the way we heard it treated tonight, although he had an extensive record of crime—murders, and other crimes of violence—and undoubtedly a condition of things very serious. Again, in 1887, although the case was weaker than in

Mr. Forster's time, the then Chief Secretary had a long catalogue of really serious cases of boycotting before him, and a most powerful combination in all parts of the country to deal with. In the speech then of the present First Lord of the Treasury introducing coercion, he said his justification for it was that there was a steady and alarming increase of boycotting, and refusing to pay rent. I do not say that the grounds for the coercion of 1887 were sufficient, but these were infinitely stronger than any grounds attempted to be put forward for the present action of the Government. At the very outset of the Chief Secretary's speech, he made a statement which, I think, I am bound to describe as most astonishing. He said that if there was one person boycotted in Ireland, the Government would be bound to protect that person by all the means at their disposal. But are we to take it that the boycotting of one person would be ground enough for the suspension of the Constitution in Ireland?

MR. WYNDHAM: When I made the statement to which the hon. Member refers, I was asking the House to revert to what I said in June last. I then stated that if one person was boycotted it would be the duty of the Government to protect that person.

MR. DILLON: There must be some relation between the extent of the evil and the extent of the remedy, and to tell me that boycotting is to be held as justifying the destruction of liberty is nonsense. This policy involves dark and unfathomable dangers in the future. In the worst old days all English Ministers felt themselves bound to make out a great ca e before they applied coercion and took away the vital right of trial by jury. Even in the days of the Duke of Wellington, Lord Peel, and Lord Russell, before any Reform Bill was passed, none of these great statesmen would have dreamt of proposing coercion for Ireland on such a miserable case as has been made to-night. I ask what has taken place in Ireland to justify this sudden and extraordinary change of policy on the part of the Chief Secretary? We were referred in his speech to four facts only—the action of the Associated Estates, an increase in the number of meetings to denounce individuals, matter published in newspapers intended to bring terror into men's minds, and a small growth in boycotting. I will deal with these one by one. The action of the Associated Estates—we have it on the words of Judge O'Connor Morris—was the direct and natural outcome of the action of the Government itself. It is not a strike against rents nor an attempt to defraud any man of his just rights. It was a natural offer on the part of the people to buy their farms at the same price as fixed by the Government after a bargain with Lord Dillon. That is not a very grievous crime. The agitation and discontent were gravely increased by the fact that there is on the De Freyne estate an agent—Mr. Flanagan—who has treated the people very harshly and unjustly. Only yesterday, at Frenchpark, a number of actions taken against the tenants by this agent were d smissed by the mag strate owing to their harshness and injustice. Doubtless those disturbances had been brought about by the action of the Government, and by the harsh and cruel action of the agent on the De Freyne estate. The whole of this agitation has been characterised by the greatest peacefulness. No crime and no intimidation is alleged, and so far as the Associated Estates are concerned, there is not a shadow of ground for coercion.

Let me come now to the increase in the number of meetings. Can there be anything more vague alleged as a ground for coercion than the holding of meetings to denounce individuals? Is it a crime to denounce individuals? Is that unknown in this country? If the Chief Secretary was at Blenheim last year, he would have heard some pretty lively denunciations of individuals. I don't think I ever read a meeting which the Colonial Secretary attended at which he did not denounce some individual, and sometimes this is emphasised by the danger of paving-stones and brickbats and bludgeons. I have denounced the Chief Secretary at several meetings. Is that a crime? I admit that if your language is an incitement to violence

against an individual, it is a crime, and you should be properly tried for it. But the Chief Secretary did not say that at these meetings individuals were denounced with a view to violence being used towards them. We have his word that no violence exists in Ireland. As to the matter put in newspapers for the purpose of bringing fear into men's minds, that is a most extraordinary charge to make, in view of what has been said in English newspapers. When three-fourths of the Press of England has been engaged in inciting mobs to hunt and injure those whom they are pleased to call pro-Boers, it appears to me this is rather a cool proposition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. The law should be the same for newspapers in Ireland as it is for Great Britain, and Irish newspapers charged with intimidating individuals ought to get the same fair play as English newspapers.

Then I come to the last ground on which the right hon. Gentleman bases his change of policy—the increase in boycotting. Anything more flimsy and preposterous than the case made by the Chief Secretary on this point I have never listened to. I noticed that the right hon. Gentleman was reluctant to make any distinction between the cases of totally and partially boycotted persons, and yet it would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of the distinction. The right hon. Gentleman says there are fifty-one cases altogether of boycotting, including all classes of persons, and on that basis alone he justifies this policy of coercion. When I asked him how many were totally boycotted, and how many partially, he said there were between five and seven totally, and the remainder partially boycotted. I admit that total boycotting is a serious thing, but let the House recall the extent to which it exists in this country on the occasion, for instance, of great strikes. Let hon. Members recall the incidents of the coal strike or the great dock strike in London. Workmen were imported, and elaborate police protection had to be organised, and yet there was no question of coercion, and as long as the strikers abstained from physical violence, there was no question of putting the law in force against the Yet Ireland is to lose whatever liberty she possesses under the Constitution because there are four or five cases complete boycotting in the country.

As regards partial boycotting, are the Members familiar with its meaning Partial boycotting is a mere question opinion. I know some Members of the House who are partially boycotted who would be returned by the police Ireland as partially boycotted. When used to do electioneering work in the country in the days of the Home Rule movement in 1885 and 1886, I never went into a constituency without being met with bitter complaints from the Radical voters of the systematic boycotting to which they were subjected What is partial boycotting? If a man drives his cattle into the fair, and they are not sold, he would be partially boycotted. An Irish policeman would return a man as partially boycotted his neighbours refused to speak to him at a fair, or if he noticed anything indicating that the man was in any way unpopular.

MR. WYNDHAM: I was very careful to draw a distinction between those cases and others. If I had taken account of such cases as the hon. Member now refers to, the figures I gave would have been much larger, involving between 1,500 and 1,900 persons.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has given no definition whatever what he means by partial boycotting My case remains unaffected. Partial boycotting is in Ireland merely what the police choose to describe as such. What after all, do fifty-one cases signify, when there is not a single case alleged in which the supposed boycotting is accompanied with violence? Are these, I ask sufficient grounds for robbing the country of its rights, and for embarking upon a fresh war against the people of Ireland? I was sorry to hear the Chief Secretary, who in some of his speeches showed considerable feeling for the Irish people, and some desire to get into touch with their real wants, describing the agitation as artificial, and gotten up by professional agitators, whom he likened

to blue-bottle flies settling down on corruption, and going round the country seeking where they might ply their mischievous trade. The right hon. Gentleman looks upon us, who are the elected representatives of the people of Ireland, who have nothing to offer the people to induce them to elect us, who are debarred from those means of influence familiar to other Members of the House—he looks upon us simply as self-seeking men, animated by the vilest conceivable motives, and going about our country with the one object of finding out some sordid local quarrel on which to fasten in order to fan the embers of disturbance into a flame.

MR. WYNDHAM: I carefully distinguished between those who initiated the agitation and the results.

MR. DILLON: I tell the right hon. Gentleman that if that is all he has learned of Ireland, his administration of it will not be very successful. We may be very objectionable to some people in this House, but they must know they cannot dislodge us from our constituencies. Whether you practise coercion in Ireland, or whether you try to "kill Home Rule with kindness," you cannot dislodge us from our constituencies. We remain here, and we intend to remain here until you restore to Ireland the right of managing her own affairs. If the Chief Secretary really holds the view he expressed in his offensive observation tonight, I say he is very poorly qualified to govern the Irish people, and he will find he has formed a very poor opinion of the Irish people in thinking that he can serve his own position by thus grossly insulting their representatives in this House.

(10.54). MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): As there was an arrangement made early in the evening that a little time should be given in which to deal with one or two of the non-controversial Budget Resolutions, I shall be very brief in the remarks I shall make tonight, but this question is of too much gravity to pass unnoticed by English and Scotch Members. There is, indeed, a dry monotony about these Irish coercion debates. To those of us whose recollection goes back twenty years, we seem to be hearing the melancholy echoes of past controversies, with the same promises in favour of coercion, and the same warnings against it. By this debate I am reminded of what was said by the First Lord of the Treasury when he brought forward his first Coercion Act of 1887. But the case he made out then was very different to the case made out now. This is the eighty-seventh Coercion Act which has been passed since the Union, and on every previous occasion, I venture to say, the case made out by the Government for demanding exceptional legislation was entirely unlike the case we have had tonight. What sort of a case have we had tonight? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in defending the exceptional action which has been taken by the Government appeared to be discharging what to him personally was a very unpleasant task in putting into force coercive legislation, because the right hon. Gentleman is attached to freedom. I do not suggest that his task was the more unwelcome because he had not a good case. Let hon. Members who were here in 1880 recollect what case there was then. Let them think of the case in 1881; think of the case in 1882, after the Phœnix Park murders; think of the case in 1887, when the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury cited to us charge after charge from the assizes in Ireland, and piled up case after case, tending to show that over two-thirds of Ireland there was a conspiracy not to pay rent. We opposed that Coercion Bill then, as we should oppose it now; but everybody who remembers the magnitude and gravity of the case then must compare it with the flimsiness and unsubstantiality of the case presented tonight.

What is the case made tonight? That boycotting has risen from thirty-seven cases in January to fifty-one cases in March, and even those cases are only what is called partial boycott. What is the meaning of "partial boycott"? It means that the police could establish a case perhaps of intimidation. We should

make quite sure of what these cases are before we resort to exceptional legislation. We have reason to believe that in many of these cases the interference with the freedom and liberty of the subject may be very small indeed. There were only five cases of complete boycott—five cases out of 5,000,000 people. What did the right hon. Gentleman say as to the condition of Ireland? He said Ireland was admitted to be exceptionally free from crime. If we look at the last ten years, I think we should find in the long and melancholy annals of Irish crime that there has hardly been a period so free from serious offences; even the agrarian offences have been slight. Yet what has been the history of those ten years? We had the Coercion Act enacted in 1887, when, no doubt, there was a great deal of crime, but not of the gravest order, not nearly so grave as the crime of 1881 and 1882. From 1887 to 1892 the Act was in force, although, if my recollection is right, one or two of its provisions were dropped before the change of Government in 1892. In 1892 there was a change of Government, and the right hon. Member for Montrose became Chief Secretary. He put into force no clauses of the Act, although he was pressed week after week by the landlord party to put the Act into force. My right hon. friend preferred the ordinary law, and the proclamations issued by the previous Government were revoked. He went on, during the three years that that Government was in existence, without resort to any exceptional legislation, and the condition of Ireland became better and better, crime steadily diminished, the minds of the people became tranquilised, and the idea grew in Ireland that a change had come about, and that idea brought about a change in the attitude of the people towards the law and towards the British Government. Then a change of Government took place in 1895, and the present President of the Board of Trade came into office as Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman did not put into force these exceptional powers. Speaking from memory, I am not quite certain whether any of these exceptional powers were used. [Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No.] The right hon. Gentleman went on during his five years of administration without those exceptional powers. There was no increase of crime; on the contrary, the condition of the country, speaking broadly, although there were disturbed areas here and there, remained peaceful and tranquil, and the good results of 1892 were not lost. The landlord party then, as now, were continually trying to induce the right hon. Gentleman to put the Crimes Act into force. There were debates in this House, and the customary articles in English newspapers; there were exaggerated statements like those which the Chief Secretary tonight, with honest indignation, has condemned—articles intended to inflame and exasperate England against Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman, with the courage and wisdom for which, I hope, we shall always honour him, refused to give way to that pressure; he continued to administer Ireland under the ordinary law; he set himself to the better policy of looking into the economic condition of the country, endeavouring to benefit her, and to turn the minds of her people out of the paths of political agitation into the paths of industry. He was strengthened in that work by a former Member of this House, whom this very ascendancy Party will not allow to return, and to whom Ireland owes a deep and lasting debt of gratitude—I mean Mr. Horace Plunkett.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): Then why did they not return him for Galway?

MR. DILLON: Because he is not a Nationalist.

MR. BRYCE: He does not belong to the Nationalist Party. Does the right hon. Gentleman wish that he should join the Nationalist Party? Is the right hon. Gentleman so bad an Irishman that he does not admit that a man may be anxious for the economic welfare of Ireland without becoming a Nationalist? Does he not think that such a course of conduct, consistently and honestly pursued, is the very course of conduct which ought to receive the cordial recognition of the

Unionist Party in Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman the present President of the Board of Trade went out of office in 1900, and was succeeded by the present Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman opposite would, I am sure, like to walk in the paths of his predecessor. There were evident signs in the way in which he presented this exceptionally and unprecedentedly weak case tonight that he was not acting on his own better judgment, but that the pressure of which we have seen and heard so much during the last few months, and the origin of which we all know, had at last proved too strong for him.

There was another point in the presentation of his case which struck me. The right hon. Gentleman did not show how these exceptional powers will enable him to put down boycotting. I think we all agree with him about the injury boycotting does; there is no difference of opinion on that point. It is one of the most difficult offences to deal with. Some Members will doubtless remember the historic speech delivered by the present Prime Minister in 1885, in which he pointed out with much force that of all offences boycotting was the most impalpable to deal with, and the one in which it was hardest to single out a particular person for indictment. Those difficulties have not disappeared; they are the same now as in 1885; and the right hon. Gentleman, in proposing to put into force these provisions, ought to have shown, as some compensation for the unquestionable evils which recourse to the Act will bring about, that there was some prospect of boycotting being put down.

There was also another admission from his statement. The right hon. Gentleman is going to use Sections 3 and 4. Section 3 compels the High Court to grant a special jury, and Section 4 is the section under which the venue may be changed. But the House knows perfectly well that boycotting is not an offence which is proceeded against by way either of special jury or of changing the venue. It is proceeded against in a summary way. Why, then, does the right hon. Gentleman propose to put these sections into force? He offered no explanation. The only explanation which occurs to me is that, as these two sections are intended to deal with graver crimes, to enable convictions to be better secured where the crime is one of darker dye, the right hon. Gentleman contemplates a recrudescence of more serious crime, that he thinks the result of the campaign he is entering upon against boycotting under Section 2 will be to induce graver crimes than have, happily, lately existed in Ireland. ["No!"] I hope that is not his belief; but, if not, why is it necessary to put into force these two sections, which confessedly are useless as regards boycotting?

I have no wish to prolong this debate. I will not remind the House that there is, as we think, a better way of dealing with Irish discontent, that the true way is to satisfy the feeling in Ireland, to bring about tranquility and contentment, to produce social order, and to surround the law there with the same respect and confidence which happily obtains in this country. The way to do that is not by coercion, but by extension of local self-government. That topic is one with which the House is perfectly familiar; I will, therefore, say only one word in parting with it. Would it not have been far better, even if you are not prepared to enter upon the path of extending—slowly and by degrees, if you like—the powers of local self-government, not to interfere with the experiment in self-government which you made by the Act of four years ago, but to bear for a little longer the confessedly slight evils now existing, to trust a little more to patience and the operation of remedial measures to cure the ills of Ireland, to endeavour to conciliate Irish tenants by extending, even gradually, the system of land purchase, than to launch once more into this vicious circle of coercion—a course which will produce more agitation, more crime, and more trouble and difficulty for Ireland? These are melancholy days in the history of this House when we are called upon either to pass Coercion Acts or to sanction their re-enforcement. These are melancholy days, because they have no hope for the future; they are but repeating the course which England has unhappily followed for so many years; and I cannot but fear that in taking the course the Government are adopting today they

are laying the foundation of a host of new troubles for Ireland and of new difficulties for England.

(11.17.) MR. MACARTNEY: As I have on one or two occasions called attention to the condition of Ireland, I wish to say a few words on this occasion, not for the purpose of reviving any controversies that I have had with the Irish Government, or of dwelling on the fact that the action they have now taken to a large extent justifies the arguments I have brought before the House, but for the purpose of repudiating the insinuation that those who were in favour of seeing the full protection of British law given to Irish subjects took up that position on behalf of one special class of the Irish population. I have never based my application for a more stringent application of the law upon the landlords question. So far as I know, the situation is not complicated by the landlords question in any part of Ireland except on one particular estate, but I have never used the De Freyne question as an argument in favour of the course I have urged upon the Government. I have always spoken on behalf of those who are not landlords—those who occupy their own farms, or are engaged, either as labourers, artisans, or shopkeepers, in the West and South of Ireland, the great majority of whom do not belong to my religion, or profess my political faith. These are the men who have suffered from the condition which has obtained for so many months in those portions of Ireland. The hon. Member for East Mayo said they were deservedly boycotted.

Mr. DILLON: I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I thought it was the hon. Member. At any rate, one of his colleagues said that these men who were suffering from the illegal intimidation produced generally by the United Irish League were deservedly boycotted. Why are they deservedly boycotted? Because they have attempted to stand out for the privileges and liberty which under the constitution they are entitled to exercise. On behalf of this class of the population, who, in my opinion, are as worthy of the sympathy of this House and the consideration of the Government as any other class, I desire to express my satisfaction that the Irish Executive have at last awakened to their responsibilities, and are now prepared, I hope, to give the people the additional protection which will secure to them the liberty of action of which they have been deprived for so many months. We have heard tonight many dismal prophecies of what may take place if the Government persist in this course. Many of us heard those prophecies fifteen years ago, and we can afford to disregard them. We know that whenever the Irish Government have made up their minds to put the law into force and to ensure that justice should be done, there has been a gradual but steady diminution of crime, the condition of Ireland has improved, and the material resources of the country have been increased.

(11.22.) LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I have great diffidence in intervening in this discussion, and I do so only because the subject-matter appears to be one of great gravity, and also one not of great complexity, but of such simplicity that those who claim no special acquaintance with Irish affairs may yet form, and without presumption express, an opinion on the matter. We have had matters introduced into this discussion, no doubt cursorily, but which nevertheless seem to me to be irrevelant to the main subject. For example, we have had a very able and eloquent criticism of the minority in Ireland from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. I have no admiration for the minority—for what is called the "Ascendancy" Party in Ireland. I think they are often hysterical, singularly incapable of helping themselves, and singularly unreasonable in the criticisms they make against the Government. But that really is not the point. It does not matter whether the minority in Ireland are reasonable or unreasonable. That is no justification for breaking the law, and it is no reason why

the Government should not enforce the law. This really has no bearing whatever upon the point, which is, whether people, under the existing circumstances of the case, should be allowed to commit criminal acts or not. In the present controversy, with regard to Home Rule, it is, at any rate, certain that a Home Rule Government would not enforce the law, and, therefore, the return of such a Government would mean the ascendancy of criminality. We approach, therefore, what is really a simple matter. I heard with amazement the doctrine of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, that experience goes to show that whenever coercion, as he calls it, was adopted, and whenever a certain number of prominent agitators are shut up in prison, then crime begins to be prevalent, and the forces of constitutional authority are nullified. I believe the contrary to be the case. The statistics, I think, prove quite overwhelmingly that whenever agitation has been allowed a free hand, crime has tended to grow, and that, whenever what the hon. and learned Member calls coercion has been adopted, crime has promptly and most remarkably diminished. I will quote from the table of statistics which was presented to the Special Commission. [Nationalist cries of "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members opposite seem to have a certain criterion of evidence. Everything that tells against them is false, and everything that tells in their favour is true. This table of statistics, which I am about to quote, was judicially proved—[AN HON. MEMBER: So was Pigott's letter.] — and, therefore, is deserving of attention. This table shows that the number of crimes in 1888 were only 301, in 1879 they were 863, in 1880, 2,587, and in 1881, when the Land League was rising in power, there were 4,439 crimes. The result was, that in the year 1882, after the passing of the Coercion Act in the previous year, the number of crimes fell to no less than 870.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That result was caused by the passing of the Land Act in 1881.

LORD HUGH CECIL: This table shows that, so far from its being true that the policy of coercion stimulates crime, it reduced it by no less a proportion than striking off four-fifths of the amount. And the House is very well aware that this statistical array, among other things, induced the Commission to find that no other cause could be properly adduced as the true cause of crime except the agitation of the National League. When we are told, "Oh, you are going back to your old coercion," that is saying nothing more sensible than to say to a person suffering from a recurrent malaria, "Oh, you are going back to your old quinine." This is a remedy that has constantly succeeded; and, though this is a milder attack of the malady than before, it bears the well-known marks of the old disease, and, being applied at an earlier stage, we have every confidence that it will have even happier results.

We have had a great deal of discussion this evening upon this subject, but let me ask whether the House really carries in its mind what is meant by boycotting. A great many people seem to think that boycotting is simply an exhibition of organised opinion by legitimate methods, and that a boycotted person really is in no worse position than an unpopular person must always be. It is perfectly true that if boycotting amounted to nothing more than unpopularity, it would be a very difficult thing to put down, and we should, in fact, have often to submit to it.

[The Noble Lord quoted a passage from the Report of the Special Commission, and continued—]

He found among the names of those who were convicted in this passage of this surely very terrible conspiracy, the name of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, who, nevertheless, thinks it not unfit to come down to the House, and, himself having been declared guilty of this offence, to advise the House, with an air of statesmanlike moderation, on what is and what is not a legitimate form of boycotting. We hear a good deal of the suspension of juries, and the interference with the British Constitution. Are we so stupid as not to realise

that all Constitutions have for their object one supreme purpose—the happiness of the governed? If it appears that any part of the Constitution is no longer the minister of liberty, but the shelter of tyranny, the sooner that part of the Constitution is suspended or set aside the better, in the interests of the governed.

I was astonished at listening to the use of the word "coercion." It is, of course, true that no system of law can be altogether without an element of coercion. No one, voluntarily, is put in the dock, or sent to prison, or the gallows, or to penal servitude. An element of coercion there must be. But the true and harmful coercion is not that which is exercised in the light of day, and before a responsible tribunal. The true coercion, against which the lovers of liberty ought to fight as long as they are able, is the coercion which is exercised secretly, and without a sense of responsibility, in the tumult of popular passion, and at the incitement of unscrupulous agitators. If there are any coercionists in this House, there they sit [pointing to the Irish Benches]. Theirs it is to play the part of oppressors, and when the Government intervene and set in motion a form of criminal procedure —and it is no more than that—under which those who are notoriously guilty; those whose guilt it is hardly thought worth while to dispute, may be brought to the justice they deserve, they are the true friends of liberty, and it is as the friends of liberty, that the great majority of this House will support the Government in the course they are taking.

(11.35.) MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said that he could not allow the speech of the noble Lord to go without some observations from the Nationalist Benches. If there was anything to justify the position which his colleagues had taken up upon this question, and which would tend to intensify the feelings of disloyalty in the hearts of the Irish people, it was speeches of the character as that to which they had just listened. There was no crime in the noble Lord's imagination which was too foul to attribute to the Irish people, and there was no charge made against Ireland which he was not willing to accept. The noble Lord knew nothing of the people of Ireland, and yet he had only just stopped short of the result which his noble father offered to the Irish people in not designating them as Hottentots. Irishmen abhorred crime just as much as the noble Lord, and the Irish representatives had as high a character amongst their own people as he had, and when they returned to their constituencies they had not to make false promises or use money for corrupt purposes, in order to get returned. He appealed to the House on behalf of the millions of Irish people who were being driven out of the country by the wretched policy of the present Government, and by this wretched policy of coercion which had been entered upon by the Chief Secretary with as light a heart as any of his predecessors.

What was the good of a measure like this, which was intended simply to endeavour to protect a very few people who were boycotted? This Coercion Act would only intensify the feeling of bitterness against those who were boycotted, and those hon. Gentlemen opposite who had any influence upon the policy of the Government, ought to

appeal to the right hon. Gentlemen not to make the position of these people any more unpleasant. The whole mass of the people would detest the policy initiated by the Irish Government. The noble Lord would have them think that he knew the history of their country better than they did, but that was an ignorant assumption which had left them this Irish problem as an heirloom. The noble Lord gravely announced that the diminution of crime in Ireland in 1882 was due to the Coercion Act. Was he so ignorant as not to know that the reason for that diminution was the great Land Bill passed in 1881? Surely the noble Lord knew the greatest Land Act ever given to Ireland was passed in 1881. Therefore it was not coercion but the operation of the Land Act which caused the diminution of crime. The Irish tenant was able to go into the land court to have the rent fixed for his farm under the Land Act, and the noble Lord had evidently forgotten the healing effect of the operation of that Act, and thought it was now necessary to resort to a further period of coercion. All I can say is that I pity the English people in their endeavour to settle the Irish question if their cabinets and councils are to be dominated by men of the character and standing of the noble Lord. That is what lies at the root of the entire evil. It is the fact there is not one touch of sympathy in their dealings with the people of Ireland, and that the policy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite is not dominated by sympathy and kindness. Those who have been through the mill in Ireland know something of the conditions of the country, but the noble Lord seems to think that he knows the entire thing better than anybody who has been there. The Government are going to harass and coerce the people in every way they can devise. I make the noble Lord a present of all he can gain by this coercion. So far from turning the people of Ireland from the pursuit of their legal and just rights, so far from suppressing this organisation, coercion will only intensify the feelings of the people. If the noble Lord enters into that with a light spirit, he will find sufficient spirit and resolution in Ireland to despise the machinery of coercion of which he is now enamoured.

(11.43.) Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 148; Noes, 253. (Division List No. 117.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William

Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John

Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight

Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William

Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John

Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings

Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)

Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher

Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.

Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshi'e
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael

Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James

Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devenport)
Murphy, John

Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Palmer, George Wm. (Reading
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur

Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter

Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal

Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thompson, Dr E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips

Ure, Alexander

Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Weir, James Galloway
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd

Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Captain Donelan and Mr. Corrie Grant.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc.
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready

Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Saville

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart

Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas

Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.

Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill

Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nder'y
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth

Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)

Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James (Lancs, Bury)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William

Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred

8BEA

Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col H. L. B. (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J H (Dumfriesshire
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morgan, Hn. Fred (Monm'thsh.)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry

Nicol, Donald Ninian

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy

Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lieut. Col. Thos Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tynes'de
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Hon Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier

Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty

Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

Warr, Agustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts
Whiteley, H. (Ashtonund. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NEW BILL.

DAY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide for the establishment of Day Industrial Schools in Ireland," presented by Mr. Harrington, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 14th May, and to be printed. [Bill 154].

WAYS AND MEANS [15TH APRIL].—REPORT.

Resolutions reported—

LOAN.

1. "That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, sums not exceeding £32,000,000 may be raised by means of the creation of 2¾ per cent. Consolidated Stock within the meaning of The National Debt (Conversion) Act, 1888; and that any annuities forming stock so created be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

"That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund."

STAMP DUTY (BILLS OF EXCHANGE).

2. That on and after the 1st day of July, 1902, 2d. shall be substituted for 1d. as the Stamp Duty on bills of exchange payable on demand, or at sight, or on presentation, or within three days after date or sight."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES.

3. "That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased Duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August 1903."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTY ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

4. "That the additional Excise Duties on Beer and Spirits imposed by Sections 6 and 7 of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

5. "That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and to amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue."

CUSTOMS—TEA.

6. "That the Customs Duty now charged on Tea shall continue to be charged until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and three (that is to say)—

Tea . . the pound Sixpence."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered, upon the First Resolution, to be brought in by the Deputy Chairman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

LOAN BILL.

"To provide for raising money for the service of the year ending the 31st day of March, 1903," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 155.]

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 18th April, 1902.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord CHANCELLOR acquainted the House. That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

City of London (Spitalfields Market).
Commercial Gas.
Furness Railway (Steam Vessels).
Gloucestershire Electric Power.
Great Western Railway (Crumlin Viaduct).
Great Eastern Railway.
Higham Ferrers and Rushden Water Board.
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Newcastle-on-Tyne Electric Supply.

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Weardale and Shildon District Water [H.L.] (Petition for additional Provision).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

CHIGWELL, LOUGHTON, AND WOODFORD GAS BILL [H.L.],

SWINDON UNITED GAS BILL [H.L.],

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

WATERFORD AND BISHOP FOY ENDOWED SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.],

Reported, with Amendments.

WADHURST GAS BILL,

Reported, with an Amendment

NEWPORT CORPORATION BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

CORNWALL ELECTRIC POWER BILL,

ERDINGTON TRAMWAYS BILL,

READING GAS BILL,

SHEPTON MALLET GAS BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed.

FINEDON URBAN DISTRICT BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed for Tuesday next.

SWANSEA CORPORATION WATER BILL [H.L.],

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE AND DUKINFIELD CORPORATIONS (ALMA BRIDGE, ETC.) BILL [H.L.]

Read 3ª and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ABERTILLERY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL [H.L.],

BRADFORD CORPORATION BILL [H.L.]

BRADFORD-ON-AVON GAS BILL [H.L.],

RHYMNEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

CONSETT WATER BILL [H.L.],

WEARDALE AND SHILDON DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.],

MARGATE CORPORATION WATER BILL [H.L.],

SOUTH-EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAYS BILL [H.L.],

WIGAN CORPORATION BILL [H.L.],

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.),

E. Wharncliffe,
L. Belhaven and Stenton,
L. Lilford,
L. Massy,
L. Pirbright (Chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL ELECTRIC EXPRESS RAILWAY BILL.

WEST HAM GAS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

CENTRAL ARGENTINE AND ROSARIO RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY (LUNATIC ASYLUMS BILL [H.L.],
BRISTOL WATER BILL [H.L.],
LONGWOOD GAS BILL [H.L.],
RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.],
NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
BUXTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL [H.L.],
NORTHUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
TYNESIDE TRAMWAYS AND TRAMROADS BILL [H.L.],
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit on Monday next till one o'clock.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Code of regulations for day schools; with schedules and appendices (1902).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Return of the population and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Twenty-one Proclamations, dated 16th April, 1902, applying to certain of the provisions of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," to the counties, county boroughs, and rural and urban districts of Ireland therein respectively mentioned. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

DIVORCE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to divorce, marriage, and legitimacy; was presented by the Earl Russell. Read 1ª, to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Thursday the 1st of May. (No. 43.)

LONDON WATER BILL.

The Earl of Harrowby exempted from further attendance on the Joint Committee, and the Lord de Mauley named of the Committee in his place.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived, and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.].

On the order for going into Committee on this Bill—

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW): I notice in Clause 1 of the Bill a provision extending the measure to the self-governing Colonies. I would point out that it would be a new departure that legislation by the Imperial Parliament should be made to apply to these Colonies without their consent; and I am not aware that their assent has been obtained to this legislation. Therefore, I shall have to ask your Lordships to agree to an Amendment eliminating the words extending the application of the Bill to the Colonies; but I will consult the noble Lord's convenience as to whether I shall move it now or on the Report stage.

*LORD MONKSWELL: I should be obliged to the noble Earl if he would put off his Amendment till the Report stage; but, in reply to what he has said, I would explain that this Bill simply contains clauses from the Bill of 1900, which was sent to the Colonies, and to which, as far as I know, no objection was raised. My noble friend Viscount Knutsford, a former Colonial Secretary, was a member of the Committee on the Bill of 1900, and entirely approved of its provisions being applied to the self-governing Colonies. Though I do not care, speaking on behalf of owners of musical copyright in this country, whether the Amendment is carried or not, I should like the matter to stand over to the Report stage in order that Lord Knutsford may be present. At this stage I do not propose to move any Amendment, but I shall probably submit one to the Standing Committee in regard to the omission of a sub-section giving power of search.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): This Bill does undoubtedly refer to what I may call the

internal police administration of the Colonies, on which matters the Colonies are usually permitted to legislate for themselves. I think it would be extremely inconvenient to make such minute administrative arrangements for the Colonies as are contained in the Bill, especially as they had not been consulted on this part of the subject. Moreover, the Bill has been justified on the ground that it is in this country that the evil which it attempts to remedy has arisen.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.]

On the Order for going into Committee on this Bill—

THE EARL OF HALSBURY said to he had received many suggestions in the way of Amendments. He did not intend to put down the Bill for the Standing Committee until a considerable interval had elapsed, probably three weeks, in order to allow those interested to consider the Bill as it stood, to make suggestions, and to arrive at some kind of agreement, for unless there was an agreement the Bill would have difficulty in passing through the House of Commons.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.],

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I should like to ask the noble Marquess whether he can give the House any information with reference to the proceedings connected with the Boer delegates and the prospects of peace.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of SALISBURY): We have this morning received some intelligence, but it is not of a very abundant character. Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener had two conferences with the Boer delegates, and at their request Lord Kitchener, while refusing an armistice on military grounds, has agreed to give facilities for the election and meeting of representatives of the various commandos to consider the position. The Boer leaders have left Pretoria for this purpose, and it is not expected that communications will be resumed in less than three weeks. I have nothing else to add.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 18th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

KENT WATER BILL [BY ORDER].

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD (SUPERANNUATION) BILL [BY ORDER.]

As amended, considered.

(3.10.) MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) in moving the Amendment standing in his name, said it was designed to give to certain officers of the London School Board the benefits of the proposed Act, which, without, they would not have secured. It made provision, however, that these officers should not be in receipt of pensions from two public sources at the same time, as they would have to forego the advantages of the Teachers' Superannuation Act if they obtained the privileges of the Bill before the House. The reason why the Amendment was put down on the consideration stage, instead of being discussed when the Bill was in Committee, was this — An

Amendment with the same object was brought forward in Committee, but the representatives of the Board of Education were unable to approve of the words proposed, and the Deputy Chairman suggested that the Amendment should be submitted in the Committee stage in another place. Between the passage of the Bill from the Committee to another place, however, a form of words had been agreed upon and accepted by the Board of Education and the London School Board, and, that being the case, it seemed desirable to put the Amendment in at that stage rather than in Committee elsewhere, since the latter course would have necessitated a further stage of the Bill. He wished, in moving the Amendment, to express his indebtedness to the Deputy Chairman of Committees for the courtesy he had shown in accepting the Amendment and for the assistance he had given throughout.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 2, page 7, line 19, after the word 'Fund,' to add the words 'Provided that any certificated teacher who, at the date of the passing of this Act, is serving in the capacity of inspector or superintendent under the School Board and is a contributor to the Officers' Fund, or who shall hereafter, by special resolution of the School Board, be allowed to contribute to such Fund, shall be included in the term "Officer." Provided also that the service of such inspector or superintendent shall not be "recorded service" under Section 1 (5) of The Elementary Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1898.'"—(*Mr. Ernest Gray.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. JEFFREYS, Hampshire, N.) explained that he had no objection whatever to the proposal when it was made in Committee, but when at that time the same or a similar clause was proposed by the hon. Member for North Camberwell, he did not care to take the responsibility of putting into an unopposed measure a clause which had not the expressed consent of the London School Board. That consent could not be at once obtained, because the School Board was in recess, and it was only yesterday that the proposition received the formal authority of the Board. Now that that authority had been received, he, of course, withdrew all opposition, which had been dictated by no hostility to the Amendment on its merits.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he was very glad to have heard the remarks of the Deputy Chairman. There had been no opportunity when the Bill was upstairs to get the Amendment formally authorised by the School Board, and the Deputy Chairman very properly said he could not agree to it under the circumstances.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.) said that, as another member of the School Board, he also was glad that the Amendment had now received the assent of the Deputy Chairman.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time.

HAMILTON GAS PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [LORDS].

Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Acton, Biggleswade (Rural), Dorchester, Durham (Rural), East Barnet Valley, Pontypridd, Richmond (Surrey), Watford (Rural), and Worcester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Atherton, Burnley, St. Helens, Tottenham, and Wallasey, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Grant Lawson and Mr. Walter Long.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Acton, Biggleswade (Rural), Dorchester, Durham (Rural), East Barnet Valley, Pontypridd, Richmond (Surrey), Watford (Rural), and Worcester," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 156.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Atherton, Burnley, St. Helens, Tottenham, and Wallasey," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 157.]

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).

MR. BILL reported from Group G of Private Bills, That the Master of Elibank, one of the members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).

MR. BILL reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Wednesday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

SIR ROBERT GUNTER reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Military Lands Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Birmingham Assay Office in relation to the application of their funds and otherwise." Birmingham Assay Office Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act for constituting the Bere, Alston, and Calstock Light Railway and a portion of the East Cornwall Mineral Railway a separate undertaking; and for other purposes." Plymouth, Devonport, and South Western Junction Railway Bill [Lords].

BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE BILL [LORDS].

PLYMOUTH, DEVONPORT, AND SOUTH-WESTERN JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Petition for additional provision, referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Levenshulme, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

FRESHWATER FISH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kirkcaldy, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HARBOUR OF REFUGE AT CLOVELLY (NORTH DEVON).

Petitions for establishment: From Appledore; Bideford; Clovelly and Bucks; and Braunton; to lie upon the Table.

ICE CREAM SHOPS (SCOTLAND).

Petition from Kirkcaldy, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Burn Cross; Neath and Dulais; Camberwell; and Southend; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Norwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from West Penwith, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Brighouse and Grays; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 15th April, 1902, declaring that Thomas Judd, Artificer, War Department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (PROCLAMATION).

Copies presented, of twenty-one Proclamations, dated 16th April, 1902, applying certain of the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 to the counties, county boroughs, and rural and urban districts of Ireland therein respectively mentioned [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the Population and Valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Nineteenth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1901, Part II, Salmon Fisheries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GOLD COAST.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Ashanti, 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (CODE 1902).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, with Schedules and Appendices, by the Board of Education [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CONSULAR APPOINTMENTS.

Address for "Return of the names, ages, and previous employment, if any, of persons appointed for the first time to the salaried Consular Service during the past five years."—(*Mr. Norman.*)

(3.40.) QUESTIONS.

South Africa—Martial Law—Right of Public Meeting.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether members of the South African League are under martial law in South Africa and allowed to hold public meetings, while their political opponents are denied this right.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. Members of the South African League are not treated differently from other persons in respect of the application of martial law. The question of permission to hold meetings rests with the administrator of the area concerned.

MR. MARKHAM: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question as to whether these persons are entitled to hold meetings, and are holding meetings.

MR. BRODRICK: I have said that they are in no different position from that of other persons as to the holding of public meetings, the sanctioning of which rests with the administrator.

Detention of British Subjects in South Africa.

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any British subject against whom no criminal charge has been made has, with the exception of Mr. Cartwright, been refused permission by the military authorities in South Africa to return to this country.

MR. BRODRICK: I have no information on this Question except in regard to the case of Mr. Leepoldt, who was also connected with the *South African News*, and who was for a time refused permission to leave South Africa.

The "Johannesburg Star."

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he gave instructions that certain

articles from the *Johannesburg Star*, enclosed in Lord Milner's despatch to him of 26th April, 1899, should not be published, and why in this particular instance these articles were not published but merely ref rred to on page 232 of C. 9345 as not reprinted; whether Lord Milner's cable despatch of 5th May, 1899, was part taken from the above articles, in particular the paragraph alleging that the Uitlanders were helots under Boer rule.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The articles were not considered of sufficient public interest to print in full. The answer to the second Question is in the negative.

MR. MARKHAM: If they were not edited by him, his Department is responsible, and I would ask who gave instructions that they should not be published? It is a matter of great interest.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member asked me whether I gave instructions. No, I did not. I do not read all the articles that come to the Colonial Office, and I gave no personal instruction in the matter. The revising of articles, papers, and despatches for publication is done, in the first instance, in the office by permanent officials.

MR. MARKHAM: I will put a further Question, whether the despatch contained part of an article written by Mr. Monypenny.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; I have already answered that in the negative.

Remount Purchases in the United States and Canada.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is in a position to state the names of those who obtained contracts for Army horses in Texas, Wyoming, and Montana, U.S.A., and also why no opportunity of tendering for these contracts was afforded to dealers in Western Canada, which district has been visited upon one occasion only by a remount purchasing Committee, whose visit was limited to a period of three months only, since the commencement of the War in South Africa.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): No contracts are given for horses in Texas, Wyoming, and Montana, and I am not aware of the names of the persons from whom horses were bought in those states. The purchasing operations in the United States and Canada are quite separate. I have already explained to the House the arrangements made for purchasing horses in Western Canada.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Does the noble Lord deny that there were large contracts for horses in Texas, Wyoming, and Montana?

LORD STANLEY: There were no contracts at all. We have purchasing officers there to buy, but not by contract.

CAPTAIN NORTON: And these officers give instructions to dealers to supply them with horses?

LORD STANLEY; I do not know what arrangements they make. As far as I know, they make absolutely no contracts; but, of course, they employ people to gather horses for their inspection and selection.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Will the noble Lord undertake to say that like facilities will be given to the farmers in Western Canada?

LORD STANLEY: Exactly the same facilities are given in Western Canada, *mutatis mutandis*, as are given in America.

Transport—The "Manila."

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the P. and O. steamship "Manila" sailed on 9th April with troops for the Cape; that her carrying capacity is 900 men; that 1,100 men were sent down to the docks; and that she ultimately sailed with 800

men and officers; and will he state who is responsible for the troops sent in excess.

MR. BRODRICK: My hon. and gallant friend appears to be misinformed. Only 800 men were sent to the ship, and that number embarked.

Imperial Yeomen in Home Employment.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many Imperial Yeomanry enlisted at 5s. a day for service in South Africa are now employed at home.

MR. BRODRICK: I cannot say precisely how many are so employed without calling for Returns, for which there is no apparent necessity.

Income Tax on Officers' Pay.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that deductions on account of income tax are made from the pay of young officers newly joined the service in South Africa, such deductions are duly notified to them, with an intimation that they are recoverable when the total income is under £160; and whether Colonial allowances are chargeable with income tax in this country.

LORD STANLEY: Income duty is not levied on the pay of young officers whose pay does not exceed the amount of £160 per annum. It is levied, temporarily, subject to rebate, in the few cases where the pay is drawn in South Africa and on Colonial allowance which is issued in the Colonies. Arrangements have been already made for ensuring rebate and special instructions have been sent to the Cheif Paymaster in South Africa.

South African Banking Transactions.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of his statement that the total charge for banking transactions for the supply of funds and movement of specie up country amounted, up to the end of November, 1901, to £87,000, and that the bulk thereof was presumably paid to the Standard Bank of South Africa, he has had his attention called to the statements of the Comptroller and Auditor General in reference to these transactions; whether, in particular, he has seen the statement of the Comptroller and Auditor General on pages 54 and 222 of the Army Appropriation Accounts to the effect that the total net loss on the transactions of the Treasury Chest Fund for the year 1900-1901 amounted to £303,813 9s. 1d., and the proportion thereof for the provision of funds for Army service to £261,839 3s. 9d.; Whether any, and if so what, portion of this sum of £261,839 3s. 9d. is to be added to the £87,000 already mentioned as the total charge for banking transactions in South Africa during the year 1900-1901; what portion thereof was paid during that year to the Standard Bank of South Africa in addition to the £87,000; and what is the total sum actually paid to that bank in respect of these services up to the end of November 1901.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I did not say that the sum of £87,000 represented the total charge for banking transactions for the supply of funds and movement of specie up country in South Africa from the outbreak of the war to the end of November, 1901, but that it represented transactions involving the movement of specie up country, and the consequent heavy insurances in time of war. During the same period, money was being provided for the Treasury Chests at Capetown and Pietermaritzburg by the Standard Bank of South Africa at the expense of the Treasury Chest Fund. The Bank's remuneration and its expenses in connection with this service were, as I also stated, covered by the discount allowed on the purchase of Treasury Chest bills, the rate of discount being at first 1 per cent., reduced subsequently to ¾ per cent. The total discount received by the Standard Bank up to the 30th November 1901 amounted to £395,750 in respect of bills amounting in the aggregate to £47,400,000. The sum of £261,839 3s. 9d. is the proportion of the total cost of Treasury Chest transactions in the year 1900-1901 which is estimated to have been

caused by transactions on Army Account. It is made up of £213,500, the cost of raising money for Army services in South Africa, and £48,339 3s. 9d. incurred for Army services in China and at other stations. The total payments to the Standard Bank consisted of the discount, £395,750 paid from the Treasury Chest Fund, besides the greater portion of the £87,000 paid from Army Votes.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): Is it not a fact that Sir C. W. Fremantle, a near relative of the Secretary of State for War, and Lord Welby, a near relative of the Under Secretary, are directors of the Standard Bank?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That is, I think, a grossly unfounded insinuation. Neither of these Gentlemen has anything to do with His Majesty's Government, and Lord Welby is well known as a strong political opponent.

Transvaal Loan of 1892.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, seeing that His Majesty's Government have paid the coupons on the Transvaal Five per Cent. Loan of 1892, which became due on the 1st January, 1901, and the 1st July, 1901, will he explain why His Majesty's Government have not authorised the payment of the coupon falling due on the 1st July, 1900.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: His Majesty's Government assumed responsibility for the payment of the coupon as from the date of the annexation of the Transvaal. Accordingly, the first coupon for which they made themselves answerable was that falling due on the 1st January, 1901. All bondholders taking payment of the coupons for 1901 agreed to surrender coupons falling due prior to that date.

The Kilt in Scottish Regiments.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the date when the new regulation was issued for the change and colour of the kilt for Highland regiments on active service.

MR BRODRICK: I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to him on Friday last, in which I stated that instructions will be issued for a kilt of khaki or some invisible colour for wear on active service.

MR. WEIR: May I ask what was the date of the regulation to that effect?

MR. BRODRICK: I think the hon. Member is going into this matter in very great detail. I really cannot give the exact date.

MR. WEIR: It is a very important Question.

Officers and the New Uniform.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been brought to his notice that many young officers with small private means serving in India are obliged to borrow money from native bankers at high rates of interest in order to provide themselves with the additional kit required in that country; and whether, with the view of preventing a larger number of officers from being obliged to have recourse to this practice in order to provide themselves with the new uniform on account of pressure brought to bear upon them by commanding officers, he will consider the advisability of issuing a definite order to the effect that a certain number of years may elapse before an officer at present serving is compelled to purchase the new uniform.

MR. BRODRICK: I have no information as regards the first paragraph, as the matter does not appertain to the War Department. As regards the second paragraph, such pressure is definitely forbidden by a circular letter sent to all general officers commanding districts. I shall be glad if the hon. Member will furnish me with any instances in which such pressure has been exercised.

Volunteer Service Dress.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether commanding officers of Volunteers will be permitted to clothe Volunteer recruits with the new service dress, and still retain the old pattern for the trained men until it is worn out.

LORD STANLEY: Yes, if application is duly made through the general officer commanding.

War Office Contractors and their Workmen.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, with reference to the wages paid by the contractors for the recent periodical painting at the Tower of London, whether he can state how many of the men employed by the contractor on this particular work were found to be receiving less than the current rate of wages, and what proportion they bore to the total number employed in their respective trades; whether the condition as to the wages to be paid in each trade are clearly set out in the terms of the contract; and whether, having regard to the contractor's action in respect of the terms of his contract, and his dismissal of the men for claiming the enforcement of the Resolution of this House, he will consider the advisability of removing this firm from the list of War Department contractors.

LORD STANLEY: I have no information to enable me to reply to the first part of the Question. As regards the second part, the contract contains the usual condition as to payment of current rate of wages. As regards the last paragraph, I have nothing to add to the reply I gave the hon. Member on the 6th March.†

H.M.S. "Diadem"—Repairs.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will explain why tenders for the repairs to H.M.S. "Diadem" are asked for, seeing that these are only boiler casings; and why this work is not done by the dockyard engineering staff.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): As I informed the hon. Member yesterday, the repairs to the boiler cases of the "Diadem" are only a part of the general refit of the ship after three and a half years service. Such a refit is effected in the case of every ship in the Service. Tenders for the repair of the "Diadem" have not been asked for, but will be invited as soon as the list of the principal items of the work has been received at the Admiralty. Owing to the pressure of other important work at the dockyards, it is proposed to carry out the general repairs to the hull, machinery, and fittings of the ship by contract.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: Is the hon. Gentleman's reply to be considered an engineering reply to the Question?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not know what kind of reply the hon. Gentleman requires. My answer gives the facts.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: This is a very important question, and as the hon. Gentleman told me yesterday that only the casings had to be repaired, will he say why tenders have been taken from outside firms to do that work?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Gentleman is entirely mistaken. I told him yesterday that the repairs to the casings were only a part of the general refit of the ship.

Slavery in Zanzibar.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if in the territory leased to His Majesey's Government by the Sultan of Zanzibar, in the ten mile coast strip called the Sultan's Dominions, and administered by British officials, the aforesaid British officials are administering the law which acknowledges the legal status of slavery; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in view of the law of this country against the recognition of slavery.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The conduct of British officials with regard to slavery in the ten mile strip is governed by the telegraphic instructions sent to Sir A. Hardinge on February 11th, 1899, which are published in the Parliamentary Paper, Africa, No. 8 (1899).

† See (4) *Debates*, civ., 583.

New Budget Proposals—Duty on Grain.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the fact that the duty on rice was repealed, together with that on dates, nuts and many other articles, in 1860; and was not a portion of the grain duty amended in form in 1864 and repealed in 1869; and whether on any previous occasion so-called locust beans, being the fruit of the carob tree, have been included as grain in taxation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The duty on rice in grain was abolished in 1860. But rice dust and meal were included in the Budgets of 1860 and 1864 at the rate of 4½d. per cwt. This latter duty was abolished in 1869. Locust beans were, until a few years ago, included under the heading "Beans," and as such were taxable under the old registration duties of 1860 and 1864.

Duty on Corn.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the case of wheat which is imported for milling and re-export as flour, a drawback will be allowed on the export of the flour equal to the duty incurred on the import of the wheat.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not in contemplation to allow a drawback on the export of flour milled from imported duty paid wheat. It was not allowed when the duty existed before. I do not see how such flour could be distinguished from flour made from wheat which had not paid duty.

Income Tax Statistics.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.)—for Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state what total amount of income tax was originally assessed in England under Schedule B in the year 1900-1901, what sum was since remitted, and the total in all collected under this Schedule.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The total amount of income tax under Schedule B, originally assessed in England in the year 1900-1901, was about £205,000. About £35,000 has since been remitted. The total collected was about £170,000.

Duty on "Temperance" Drinks.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state to what extent, if any, during the last three years so-called temperance drinks have been charged with duty, as containing over 2 per cent. of proof spirit.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There is no law which enables the Board of Inland Revenue to charge duty upon so-called temperance drinks if they are found to contain more than 2 per cent. of proof spirit. But during the last three years, proceedings have been instituted in 136 cases, in which a penalty had been incurred by the sale of such drinks without licence.

Savings Banks Funds Committee.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Select Committee on Savings Banks Funds, as appointed, consists preponderantly of representatives of the Treasury and of banking and capitalist interests; and whether, having regard to the fact that the inquiry will affect the rate of interest, security of deposits, and freedom of opportunity of investment of thrifty working people, he will add one or two representatives of labour to the Committee.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir, I do not consider that there is any such preponderance on the Committee as the Question suggests. I am the only representative of the Treasury, past or present, from either side—and there are at least five gentlemen on the Committee with practical experience in connection with Savings Banks, which gives them a special knowledge of the habits and desires of thrifty working people, and who are as much entitled as any one else to be described as representatives of labour.

MR. CHANNING: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think this is a question on which the advice of labour representatives is specially required?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have said that I think representatives of labour are already on the Committee.

Delay in Lighthouse Reliefs.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that the steamer due with reliefs at the Fastnet, Bull, Skelligs, and Fearagh Lighthouses on the 15th March did not arrive until the 25th, and on the 1st of this month until the 6th, though the weather was favourable for earlier calls; and whether he will see that in future, when possible, the steamer will call punctually in order to afford a supply of fresh provisions to the light-keepers employed on these lighthouses.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): No, Sir, my attention has not been called to the matter, which is, however, purely a matter for the Irish Lights Commissioners. I am informed by them that the dates mentioned are, roughly speaking, correct, and that the reliefs of the stations named are carried out as near the 1st and 15th of the month as circumstances permit.

Meat Carriage between Liverpool and London.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that an arrangement exists between the carrying corporations and the Birkenhead Customs authority that consignments of foreign meat over a certain weight, conveyed by special train to London, are carried at the rate of 25s. per ton, and that a rate of 50s. per ton is charged for the same service upon native meat consigned to London per ordinary goods train outside the Birkenhead Customs area; whether he will make inquiry and amend this preferential rate to foreign produce.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; I am aware of no such arrangement. The hon. Member may perhaps remember that in answer to a Question put by him in 1897 my right hon. friend the Home Secretary stated that the London and North Western Railway Company had informed him that the rate for the carriage of meat from Liverpool to London by goods train was 25s. a ton for a minimum weight of three tons, and 40s. a ton for smaller quantities above three cwt., and that these rates were charged irrespective of the source of origin of the meat. As I have on previous occasions informed the hon. Member, I shall be glad to make inquiry into any specific cases of unfair treatment alleged on the part of persons receiving or sending or desiring to send goods by railway.

MR. FIELD: If I furnish the right hon. Gentleman with facts on this question, will he make inquiry?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I must have specific cases before I can inquire.

MR. FIELD: I propose to furnish them.

The Coronation—Expenditure by Local Authorities.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Order he proposes to issue sanctioning expenditure by local authorities for the celebration of the Coronation will also include expenditure by Parish Councils; and, if so, how much in the pound may be levied by them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): As I stated last week, Parish Councils will be included in the Order referred to. With regard to the second point, the Order will sanction only the reasonable expenses of a Parish Council in the matter. There will be no special provision as to the amount they may expend for the purpose. Section 2 of the Local Government Act, 1894, however, directs that a Parish Council shall not, without the consent of a Parish Meeting, incur expenses which will involve a rate exceeding 3d. in the pound, and that the sum raised for their

expenses in any year shall not exceed a sum equal to a rate of 6d. in the pound on the rateable value of the parish. This section will not be affected by the Order. I may add that the Order will not legalise any expenditure on the part of the local authorities to which it refers. It will only prevent the disallowance by the district auditor of any reasonable expenses incurred by them in this matter.

Multiplication of Telegraph Poles.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the inconvience caused in country districts by the multiplication of telegraph and telephone poles along the roads, whereby both traffic is impeded and the scenery disfigured; whether he is aware that there are already in some places two sets of poles, belonging to the Post Office telegraphs and a telephone authority respectively, and that these poles often carry few wires, and that in some places a third set of poles will probably be erected by a competing authority; and whether, in such cases, the Post Office would allow the various telephone authorities to place their wires on their poles on rental terms, and when the existing poles are not strong enough would undertake to erect poles sufficiently strong to carry the various sets of wires.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The Postmaster General does not think that the cases to which the hon. Member refers are numerous, or that the poles in such cases have been erected in such a manner as to impede the traffic. He is, however, very desirous of meeting the wishes of local authorities as far as practicable, and he would be prepared to consider in any particular case the question of allowing his licensees to rent wires erected on Post Office poles. It would not, he thinks, be desirable that telephone authorities should bo allowed to place their own wires on Post Office poles.

National Gallery—Loans to Provincial Galleries.

MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether there are numbers of Turner drawings stowed away in boxes at the National Gallery; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have them distributed amongst other picture galleries.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps I may answer this Question. Besides the drawings exhibited at the National Gallery, and the collections which are lent to galleries in the provinces, there are eleven tin boxes containing rough sketch notes chiefly in pencil, on leaves of small pocket books. But the contents of these boxes have been repeatedly sifted, and everything at all fitted for exhibition selected from them.

Ventilation of the House.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can inform the House of the result of the recent examination of its air; and whether he will apply the same scientific test to the atmosphere of other public buildings, such as the Central Criminal Court and the British Museum Library.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The tests of the air in this chamber show a very good result as regards the amount of carbonic acid, which was only 5.2 volumes in 10,000—very little in excess of the quantity usually met with in the air of cities, and far less than what is generally present in places of assembly. The bacteriological test revealed an undue number of micro-organisms, but none of them are found to be disease producing. The full reports of Dr. Thorpe, the Principal of the Government Laboratory, will be laid before the Select Committee on the ventilation of the House; and I propose that further experiments shall be made in order to discover the cause of the presence of so many microbes, with a view to taking suitable measures of improvement. I will consider the hon.

Member's suggestion as to other Government buildings, but the Central Criminal Court is not in any way under my control.

Trees near Westminster Abbey.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will state by whose authority the branches of the trees between Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's Church have been lopped, and why the trees have been so disfigured and injured.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The tree cutting has not been done by my orders, and I have no authority over this site, which is the churchyard of St. Margaret's.

MR. COGHILL: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us who are the authorities who have power to cut down the trees?

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I will make inquiry, if the hon. Gentleman desires.

Evening School Regulations.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can explain why the Regulations for Evening Schools, which have recently been presented to Parliament, and which supersede those set out in the Minute of 3rd July, 1901, do not contain the words "presented to Parliament pursuant to 33 and 34 Vic., c. 75, s. 97," and "to lie upon the Tables of both Houses for one month," which were endorsed on the original Regulations.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): Because such words are not, in the opinion of the Board of Education, applicable to the Regulations.

DR. MACNAMARA: Does the Board of Education intend in future to issue Regulations of this character without submitting them to Parliament?

SIR JOHN GORST: The only Regulations which need by statute be laid on the Table are those which apply to public elementary schools.

DR. MACNAMARA: But have these Regulations been laid?

SIR JOHN GORST: Yes.

London Evening Schools.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Clause 18 (1) of the Education Bill, excluding all evening schools from the operation of the Elementary Education Acts, and Clause 18 (2) excluding scholars over fifteen years of age from the operation of the Elementary Education Acts, will apply to London if the Bill becomes law.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The answer is in the negative.

Highland Deer Forests.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the deer forest area in the Highland crofting counties is being extended; and in view of the fact that the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892) scheduled 1,782,785 acres of land as suitable for occupation by the people, will he state when he proposes to introduce the legislation on the subject.

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithnesshire): I beg at the same time to ask why no legislation has been introduced this session dealing with the deer forests and other lands referred to by the Highlands and Islands Commission, 1892.

*MR BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs): Before those Questions are answered, I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that a Royal Commission on Deer Forests in the Highlands and Islands reported that for thirty years, throughout the whole of Scotland, there was but one single case of the eviction of a human being for the purpose of extending deer forests.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe what my hon. friend has said is a statement of the fact. As regards the Question on the Paper, I have to say that, if deer forests in the Highlands have been extended at all, that extension has not been on any great scale, and in no case

at the cost of the crofter population. I do not, therefore, under the circumstances, propose to bring a legislation before the House.

MR WEIR: In consequence of this unsatisfactory reply, and the apparent want of knowledge shown by the right hon. Gentleman, I shall put another Question to him and furnish him with facts.

Mail Service to Shetland.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can hold out hopes that some action will be taken to introduce into the mail service between Shetland and Aberdeen those improvements, or some of them, which were pressed upon him in the memorial from Shetland recently presented to him from the County Council of Shetland and the Town Council of Lerwick.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps I may answer this. According to the last accounts which were taken, there was such a heavy loss on the postal service to the Shetland Islands that no additional expenditure for the sake of affording improved postal facilities could be justified. On receipt of the renewed representations from the inhabitants, it was thought desirable to have fresh accounts, and instructions were accordingly given for these to be kept. The Postmaster General will inform the right hon. Gentleman of the result.

Public Fishing Rights in Orkney.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the temporary lease by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests of certain sea fishings in Orkney confers on the lessees absolute power of prohibiting the public from exercising rights and privileges which it is claimed that the public have always enjoyed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. There are only two such leases, and in each case the lessee has given an undertaking to grant permits to all *bonâ fide* fishermen with rod and line. I must not be understood to express any opinion as to the legality or otherwise of the rights claimed for the public.

Trawling in the Moray Firth.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that from fifteen to twenty trawlers, which are in the habit of fishing in the Moray Firth under a foreign flag, are the actual property of Grimsby trawl owners, and that several vessels which formerly sailed under the Grimsby and North Sea Steam Trawling Company are now registered at Brevig, and sail under the name of the Zodiac Steam Fishing Company; and will he say whether the Government proposes to take any steps to prevent this action by Grimsby trawl owners.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Secretary for Scotland is informed that eight trawlers owned by the Grimsby and North Sea Steam Trawling Company and six trawlers owned by the Metropolitan Steam Fishing Company were transferred to the Norwegian flag, and that the former are now registered at Brevig under the name of the Zodiac Steam Fishing Company; but he is not aware whether these vessels are the actual property of Grimsby trawl owners. It is understood that steps are being taken by the Norwegian Government to test the *bonâ fides* of such transfers. No present action on the point referred to by the hon. Member is contemplated by His Majesty's Government.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Is it beyond the scope of possibility to secure that trawling shall be absolutely prohibited in these waters?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a general Question which does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Irish Pork Trade with Glasgow.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the Municipal Corporation of Glasgow has under consideration a series of by-laws dealing with the examination of all fresh meat and meat surface-salted only; that certain fixed stations are to be appointed for this purpose, with the object, so far as pork is concerned of ascertaining whether it is infected with

trichinæ; whether he is aware that quantities of Irish pork, amounting to about 100 tons weekly, are imported into Glasgow, and that there is no case on record of Irish pork being so infected; and whether, in view of the effect that these by-laws, if passed in their present form, would have on the Irish pork trade with Glasgow, he will see that they contain a provision exempting Irish pork from their operation before they are confirmed by the Secretary for Scotland.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Secretary for Scotland is informed that the Corporation of Glasgow have for some time past had under consideration the question of making by-laws for the inspection of meat under the provisions of Section 33 of the Glasgow Police Amendment Act, 1890, and that it is proposed to appoint fixed stations for the examination of carcases, meat, and flesh brought into the city, but that it is not intended to make special provision for the inspection of imported pork in the manner suggested. The by-laws, if and when they are adopted by the Corporation, will, however, have to be submitted to the Secretary for Scotland for his sanction in terms of the statute, and any representations will be fully considered before the by-laws are confirmed.

Fair Rents in Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the tenants on the estate of Wren and Stokes, North Kerry, in Chancery since 1883 (Record No. 25: Receiver, John E. Harris; Landed Estates Court), are not allowed to purchase their holdings, or enter the Land Courts to have fair rents fixed, owing to leases which they were obliged to take by the Court; and whether he is aware that some are obliged by the receiver to hold their land under the eleven months grazing system.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): This estate is being administered in the Court of Chancery. No proceedings for its sale are pending. The persons referred to as tenants are not, and never were, tenants, but merely persons who hold under agistment or grazing contracts, which they have renewed. They were not required to sign such contracts.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that these men had held their farms till 1891, when they were evicted; that then they were kept on as caretakers for three years, after which they were compelled to sign contracts as eleven months graziers, and that some who refused to to so were proceeded against.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of that, but it does not affect anything I have said in my answer.

De Freyne Estate—Conduct of Police at Evictions.

* MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 2nd instant, while the eviction of James Tansey, of Gurteen, County Sligo, on the De Freyne estate, was proceeding, the furniture of Tansey was thrown out on the road and broken by the bailiffs, and a trunk containing private letters was opened and examined by the police, and most of its contents carried away by them, and whether such action has the sanction of the Irish Government; and will he take steps to have these documents returned to Tansey.

MR. WYNDHAM: The District Inspector of Constabulary and the Sub-Sheriff remonstrated with the bailiffs for roughly handling the furniture. The statement that the police opened a trunk, examined and carried away its contents, is without a particle of foundation.

* MR. O'DOWD: May I inform the right hon. Gentleman that I am in a position to prove the accuracy of the statements contained in the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot argue the matter now.

Land Sales on the Darcy Estate.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant

of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations are at present in progress for the sale to the tenants of portion of the Drocastle estate, situated in the barony of Costello, County Mayo; and will he explain why the remaining portion of this estate is excluded from the scheme of purchase.

MR. WYNDHAM: Negotiations are in progress for the sale of lands on the Darcy estate. Whether these lands comprise the whole or part only of the estate mentioned in the Question, I cannot say. But, in any case, it is not for me to explain why certain lands are not to be sold.

Poyntz Pass National School.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education have received any complaints about the teaching of the Poyntz Pass (No. 1) National School; whether he is aware that a number of the children have been withdrawn by their parents from that school; whether he can explain why the school has not been examined this year by the Government Inspector; whether he will state the nature of the inspector's report of the last examination, and when it was held, and also the cause of the disorganisation of this school, and the nature of the complaints made regarding it; and whether the Commissioners will take any, and, if so, what steps to make the school efficient.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first two queries is in the affirmative. The date for holding the annual examination of the school has been changed from January to April, owing to a rearrangement of the inspection work of the district. The last yearly examination was in January, 1901. The inspector's report is a confidential document, and, as such, its contents cannot be disclosed. The persons objecting to the school desire to have the present female teacher removed, and a male teacher appointed. The Commissioners will take such action as may appear to them to be required.

Dundrum Asylum Officials.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the inspector's arrangement regarding the hours of officials in the Central Asylum, Dundrum, County Dublin, has not yet been carried out; and whether he can state when the hours will be shortened as agreed upon.

MR. WYNDHAM: The representations of the tradesmen attendants at this asylum were investigated last year, and it was decided that no change could be made in the conditions of their service. No undertaking to shorten the hours of service was given, as alleged. These officials have not been asked to perform any duties outside their agreements when they accepted their posts.

Appointments in Limerick Post Office.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I postpone, by request, a Question to the Secretary of the Treasury as to certain recent appointments in the Limerick Post Office, but perhaps the hon. Gentleman will answer the last part of the Question—whether, in the inquiry which has been promised, the evidence of both the male and female staff will be taken.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will communicate with the Postmaster General. I should not like to give an answer offhand.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In conformity with a pledge I gave to the House a few days ago, it may be proper for me now to say that Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener have had two conferences with the delegates, and at their request Lord Kitchener, while refusing an armistice on military grounds, has agreed to give facilities for the election and meeting of representatives of the various commandos to consider the position. The Boer leaders have left Pretoria for this purpose, and it is not expected that communications can be resumed in less than three weeks.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Donegal (West Donegal), in the room of James Boyle, esquire (Manor of Northstead).—(*Captain Donelan.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following fifteen Members in respect of the Cremation Bill [Lords]:—Mr. Banbury, Mr. Black, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Jesse Collings, Sir Michael Foster, Sir Walter Foster, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Lowe, Dr. MacDonnell, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Seton-Karr, Dr. Thompson, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Luke White, and Sir Fredrick Wills.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

That they have appointed a Committee consisting of seven Lords to join with the Committee appointed by this House, pursuant to Message of this House, "to consider the Standing Orders relating to houses occupied by persons of the labouring class and the Clauses usually inserted in Private and Local Bills and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills in pursuance thereof; and to report whether any Amendments should be made in such Standing Orders and Clauses, and especially whether any and what provision should be made for better securing the re-housing of all persons of all persons of the labouring class who may be displaced in connection with the undertakings to which the Bills relate, whether displaced under the powers given by the Bills, or otherwise;" and that they do propose that the said Joint Committee do meet in Committee Room B, on Friday the 2nd of May next, at Three o'clock.

Lords Message considered.

Ordered, That the Committee of this House do meet the Lords Committee as proposed by their Lordships.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

NEW BILLS.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL (IRELAND) ACT (1899) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To extend the powers of the Department of Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction for Ireland in the matter of the development of tourist traffic, and to amend the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899," presented by Mr. Carvill, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Field, Mr. MacVeagh, and Mr. John Campbell; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 158.]

LAND DEDICATION BILL.

"For the Dedication of Land for public purposes," presented by Lord Balcarres, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Bryce, Sir John Brunner, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir Thomas Esmonde, and Mr. Lonsdale; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES 1902-3.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,411,250 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Working Expenses of the Post Office Telegraph Service."

*(4.15.) CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said the matter to which he wished to draw attention in connection with this Vote would, he thought, appeal to the Members of the House, because it dealt with the efficiency of a certain important branch of the Civil Service, inasmuch as it dealt with the state of contentment of the employees in that branch of the service. He must appeal to the House to give

him a fair hearing in connection with this matter, because it had never been his practice to appeal to the Committee with reference to imaginary complaints, and this was one which was real, substantial, and permanent. The case briefly was this, that the Government had been guilty of a distinct breach of faith in connection with a certain number of worthy Government officials. He knew that to make this statement of breach of faith was what must be called a strong order, but he was prepared to prove that he was not exaggerating in the smallest degree. He would point out in the first place that he referred to the class of Government officials known as postal telegraphists, and he might incidentally point out that this was a service which had grown, as the expression was, by leaps and bounds, and that since 1870 telegraphy had increased tenfold, the numbers of the instruments in use had increased sevenfold, and the speed had increased fivefold. Higher skill, intelligence, and education were required from the employees, and in addition to that they had to possess a certain amount of technical education not required before, inasmuch as this technical work was done formerly through the Engineer's Department of the Post Office, and as a proof of this he would refer to what Sir William Preece said in 1895. He stated that these employees in the higher class should also comprehend the nature of faults that occurred in the apparatus, to evince an ability to remove those faults and generally to secure the maintenance of the apparatus. Therefore a higher standard of technical skill was required from them. They were subjected to a greater strain and there was an increased mass of work. It was said that their position was a good one compared with those who did similar work out of doors. That he entirely denied. For example, the Eastern Telegraph Company paid their head operators up to £204. In Germany those who did the same class of work could reach £162, and in Holland they could reach £183 at the age of forty years. In both those countries the cost of living was considerably less than it was in this country. What was the history of the way in which these gentlemen had been dealt with? When they presented themselves for examination, a paper was placed in their hands and certain prospects were held out to them by that paper, which was issued by the Civil Service Commissioners. This was what was stated in the paper—

"The Civil Service Commissioners are authorised by the Postmaster General to append the following notice"—

Then an enumeration took place of certain conditions they had to fulfil and the following paragraph occurred—

"After a year at 16s. a week to advance to £45 a year rising by £5 a year to £100, with a prospect of obtaining £190."

These men entered service on the distinct understanding that they could reach £190 salary. But owing to a classification which it had suited the Government to make, a certain number, some 200, of the present men were placed in this position, that they could not, humanly speaking, attain to that £190. This was how it occurred. The Government, finding their business developing, found it also convenient at the same time to ask the senior telegraphists to take a certain share of what were known as supervising duties, and in order that they might successfully carry out these duties they there and then instituted a technical examination. Many of the men objected to the examination because they were placed in a position which prevented them from having the necessary practice to fulfil those conditions, and as a result of that the Government had to go back upon their order, and in 1897 they had to do away with that practice. But they did not do away with that particular class of supervision. They continued it, and by means of this classification they had made it impossible to fulfil conditions laid down in the paper presented to those men. Formerly they were able to reach this position after from twenty-one to twenty-three years service. Lord Londonderry, on 25th April, 1901, made this statement. He said that the conditions under which promotion to the senior class is now obtained are precisely the same as they always have been, namely, good conduct and competence to perform superior duties. Sir H. Fisher, who was the controller of the Central Telegraph Department made this statement. He said ordinary manipulative ability, combined with regular attendance and good

conduct were considered sufficient qualifications for promotion to the senior classes. Therefore, it was perfectly clear from the statements of the postal authorities themselves that, provided a man fulfilled these conditions—it said nothing whatever about supervising duties—as an efficient operator he was to be allowed to rise to the maximum scale of £190. At the present moment it was absolutely impossible for them to do so.

It was quite likely that the hon. Gentleman who was about to reply to him would endeavour to get through the meshes of the net by means which were not uncommon to the Front Bench. He would endeavour to prove that this did not apply altogether to operators, but to those men—those arbitrary classes—which the Government set forth, namely, these supervisors, but up to a few years ago these very Estimates with which they were now dealing continued under the head of the central telegraph office, a section headed "General Body" and under that "senior first class and second class telegraphists." No mention was made of supervisors. Had they intended to include supervisors they would not have stopped at the sum of £190. He would put another Question to the hon. Gentleman. If £160, which was the maximum sum stated, according to present intentions held good now, he presumed that the hon. Gentleman would not deny that it held good that every man entering the service now as an operator could rise to £160, and it held good equally with reference to the £190 in the past. If the present promise was binding, then the previous promise was undoubtedly binding. Moreover, there were only some 200 Gentlemen now to be dealt with. This injustice, for it was nothing less, this breach of faith having been in operation for some years the result had been that a large number of men were now out of the service, and had been unfairly treated. But some 200 still remained, and the least the Government could do was to show justice to these 200 men.

Now he came to the question whether it was unfair or unreasonable to demand that they should be paid on this scale. He might put aside for a moment the question of the breach of faith, because he thought it could not by any possibility be denied. When this class was formed in 1881, and when the maximum was fixed at £190 this was what Mr. Fawcett said in his letter to the Treasury of 13th January, 1881—

> "The rates of pay which I propose are not more than sufficient to afford just and reasonable remuneration to those, on whose efficiency and contented service so much of the interest and convenience of the community depend."

Then he went on to say—

> "The first scale will be paid where duties of the first quality have to be performed."

Had he been speaking of supervising duties in connection with the £190, he would have had to speak of duties of the lowest scale, because the lowest supervisor was paid at a higher rate than those to which he refers, which again went to prove the truth of his contention with reference to the sharp practice on the part of the Government. Now he asked this—Was there a single instance in any other Government Department of the Civil Service where regulations issued by the Civil Service were not the regulations which really governed promotion and the conditions of service. He thought hon. Gentlemen would admit that that was so. Then it seemed to him that a gross injustice had been done with reference to this particular class. A deputation had gone to the Postmaster General some time ago, and the Committee would be surprised when he told them that one of the officials made this statement. He said to the subordinate official he was cross questioning—

> "Suppose we had an epidemic of influenza in London next winter, and a large number of these men who had got into the higher class died off, would you not then attain perhaps to this position?"

Well, that was trifling with the question. There was no human possibility of these men attaining that position which they were allowed to believe they would attain under the conditions which he had laid down and which he would not repeat. It was painful to him to bring these things forward, because it was despicable on the part of the Government, which ought to be a model employer, to deal in this way with their officials, more especially with men of such a subordinate position. He had a letter from Lord Londonderry

dated 25th April, 1887, signed by Mr. Murray, which referred to the advantages of the Government servants —pensions, holidays, medical attendance and so forth. Upon every occasion when he brought the grievances of Government employees before the Committee this wretched absurdity was trotted out. He had repeatedly told the hon. Gentleman that all these advantages which the Government claimed for their employees could be obtained for the sum of 6d. a week from any ordinary friendly society.

He did not desire for a moment to take an unfair advantage of, or to make any absurd demands upon, the hon. Gentleman. He did not suggest that all the machinery of the Post Office should be upset again, though the Post Office had been guilty of a breach of faith as regards these people. In the case of those who were entering the maximum might be left at a £160 instead of £190, although he thought it was not prudent to differentiate between men doing the same kind of work. But at any rate let the Government have the honesty to acknowledge that they had made a mistake, and let them do justice to those who had been dragged into the service of the Crown under unfair conditions. Let the men remain as operators, but at any rate give them the increase of pay which they were promised. He asked that they should get the same rate of pay as their predecessors had before this rule, made to suit the Post Office, was brought into operation. He begged to move as an Amendment to reduce the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That Item A (Maintenance of the Postal Telegraph System) be reduced by £100." —(*Captain Norton.*)

*(4.34.) MR. HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said he had listened with interest to the remarks which had fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, who had entered into the details so minutely as to make it unnecessary for him to go into them again. This was not a matter of Party politics which affected the Ministry of the day, but one in which each Government, drawn from either side of the House, had been equally to blame. The Committee should regard this as a matter of Departmental administration, upon which it might give its decision. The point which the hon. and gallant Member made so clear was that certain members of the Central Telegraphic Staff joined the public service under express conditions, conditions which entitled them, after honourable and long service, to a maximum of £190 per annum, whereas they found by the operation of this regulation they had been jockeyed out of their £190 and had to remain content with £160. The question was not one which affected a limited number of the service, because there were something like 3,000 male operators on the staff of the Central Telegraph Office.

The regulation to which exception had been taken was a regulation made with regard to about 170 of those men who attained the maximum of £190. Apart from the actual justice of the case, so far as the regulation was concerned, very much graver questions were raised. There was the fact that men who had joined in times past, and who had looked forward to this £190, were now confronted with the increased cost of living. Living in London had become considerably more expensive in recent years. In support of that statement he would like to mention one or two facts. The rental payable for dwellings such as those occupied by the Civil Service Clerk, such as telegraphists, in the Croydon district was 12s. per week. After making allowance for the railway ticket, the annual cost came out at £42 9s. in 1892; since then it had increased to £49 19s. In the West Brompton district it had increased from £46 in 1895 to £60 10s. in 1902. In all districts the increase had been equally marked. Of course, the point generally argued by all gentlemen in the position of his hon. friend was that finality had been reached in this matter by the findings of the Tweedmouth Committee. But the findings of that Committee were revised within six months at a conference between Members of Parliament, the Postmaster General, and the representatives of the men. He submitted that the case of these men was a fair one on which to demand that

justice might be done. The only thing which he would ask the Committee to bear in mind was that it was no argument, to say that because there were a large number of candidates for the position these men held the State, or the Government should pay the lowest wages. The State should be a model employer, and should not, by the higgling of the market, become the prime sweater of the country. He could not emphasise that, point more strongly than by saying that while all around these men the standard of wages had risen for every kind of labour during recent years, theirs had remained stationary. Their wages did not rise in ratio to the cost of their living; but, on the contrary, they found they had been done out of something like £30 of the probable maximum they would obtain after an active and useful career. After all, the State aimed at secur ng for its service only the best, and those who devoted themselves to this particular work, instead of finding the best career in the public service, found that the Telegraphic Department of the Post Office was only useful as a recruiting ground from which the great cable companies recruited their staffs. That had come about simply because the great Cable Companies insisted upon the highest efficiency and paid for it, and they gave greater attractions to these men, who might otherwise have had a useful career in the Post Office to the public advantage. By a higher rate of pay and also a pension, the companies rendered their service infinitely more attractive than that of the Post Office.

So far as he was personally concerned, he had certainly made no special election pledges to the Post Office Telegraphic officials in his constituency, but he had lived in close contact with these men and knew their legitimate grievances, and he believed that their demands did not always get the kindly and sympathetic attention of this House which they deserved. The hon. Member below him had his fullest sympathy when he was confronted day after day with typewritten answers to questions put by him to his hon. friend, who, however sympathetic he might be, had not the slightest possible power to alter these things. The power he exercised in this matter was to maintain simply that which was told to him as the official view of the Postmaster General. He hoped, nevertheless, that his hon. friend would realise that the views of the Postmaster General were not the only views which existed in the Department, but that there was intense feeling, not on the part of one discontented person but on the part of those who had given their best energies to the study of the subject. The object which the Committee had in view was to remedy what might be considered the legitimate grievances of a large body of public servants who did their best for the public and who ought to be encouraged, so that instead of there being this continuous state of discontent pervading the officers of the State, there should be a spirit of content and a desire on the part of these men to do their best.

*(4.48.) SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said that these matters had been debated at length on previous occasions, but unfortunately grievances were not redressed by long speeches or by lapse of time, or, indeed, not redressed at all. For a long time past there had been a very strong and general feeling in the service that many of the men had been the victims of something amounting almost to an imposition, however unintentional, on the part of a public Department. Strong terms had been used in the course of the debate, but he should endeavour to deal with the matter on the basis of what he believed to have been a contract between these employees and the Post Office Department. It was not difficult to show that that implied—or he might even say express—contract had induced many to enter the service, only to find that the contract was afterwards departed from by one of the contracting parties, viz., the State. The inducement to a large number of young men to enter the service was the wording of an official note, and the note was the basis of the contract. These young men were to go through a very long period of service, with, at any rate in the earlier stages, very inadequate remuneration, accepted in the belief that it would

become more substantial as they advanced in life, and all the time with the cost of living increasing. According to the words put before them by the Post Office through the Civil Service Commissioners before they entered their examination the contract was—

"with the prospect of proceeding to £190 a year."

The question of non-promotion was not the question at all. There might be times when promotion was difficult, owing to lack of vacancies. But these gentlemen were entitled to say that there should be a continuance of substantially the same right of access to positions which would give them £190 as existed at the time the inducement was held out. Many obstacles had been put in the way of the fulfilment of that promise. In the first place, a technical examination was imposed, and that formed a barrier to the employees entering the class which received £190. Unless he was mistaken, that examination was withdrawn, a proof that the Department felt at that time they were interposing an unfair obstacle, and to that extent the grievance was remedied. The class of supervisors in itself was an obstacle, and so long as the condition at present existing continued, the feeling of injustice would remain. There was also the fact that promotion was less attainable now than at the time the regulations were made. That stoppage in the flow of promotion he believed to be due to the interposition of new barriers since the making of the contract. It was an element in the discussion of the subject that the original terms of inducement had been withdrawn. Why? Because it was felt that they offered an undue inducement which could not be fulfilled. If he was correct in his recollection, new terms were substituted. That, again, was a confession that the terms originally proposed were undue inducements and misleading. Then there was the fact that the officers of the Department, in their evidence before the Tweedmouth Commissioners, undoubtedly expressed sympathy, and, what was more important, a sense of injustice—at any rate, one, Sir Henry Fisher, did. If the complaint on grounds of contract was well founded, as he believed it to be, it was the interest of the State to endeavour to remove the grievance. If the Department had any doubt as to whether they were doing that which would conduce to the contentment, and therefore the efficiency, of the service, their plain duty was, even at some cost and inconvenience, to remove the grievance which existed, or at any rate to grant to those subjected to it an independent Committee to examine into the matter. At present grievances existed, and by his vote and voice he should certainly do his best to remove them, both in the Telegraphic and Postal Departments, and if there was any doubt as to the grievances then an independent Committee ought to be appointed to examine the £190 rate, and as to civil rights of the Services and all other open sores.

MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) was understood to say he had been approached by the telegraphists in his Division. They came before him, both at the time of the election and since, and told him their story. He thought it a reasonable one, and promised to do what he could to help them. In pursuance of that promise, he desired to support the appeal which had been made. He was a little sorry that the hon. Member who opened the debate appeared to refer to the Post Office as a political Department. The Department knew no politics, and was independent of Governments. As a matter of fact, the Tweedmouth Commission, with regard to which so much dissatisfaction was felt, was appointed by a Liberal Government.

CAPTAIN NORTON pointed out that the grievance was of long standing before the Tweedmouth Commission was appointed. That Commission attempted to remove it to some extent, and did, in fact, abolish the technical examination.

MR. DAVID MACIVER quoted from a statement issued by the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association, to show that they protested against the composition of the Tweedmouth Commission even before it commenced its inquiry. He hoped the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would meet the views which were largely held by the people of Liverpool, and

grant to these dissatisfied civil servants an inquiry such as they desired. They simply asked for an impartial inquiry. It was not for him to say anything more, except that he sympathised with the case which had been put before the House. He thought there was a great deal to be said from the telegraphists' view. The cost of the necessaries of life had increased considerably since the subject was last considered, and the time might fairly be said to have arrived when the matter should be again inquired into.

(5.0.) THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I always listen with great regret to any hon. Member who thinks it his duty to charge a Government Department with breach of faith. No charge can be more serious than that, and there is no charge which a Government Department would less desire to deserve, or even to be suspected of deserving. I, therefore, cannot accept the views of the hon. and gallant Member, and I shall base my refusal upon a direc denial of the charge that there has been any breach of faith. If I thought for a moment there had been such a breach, I should not be here to defend the Department, nor would my noble friend the Postmaster General ask me to do so. I think the Committee should have brought to its notice the exact extent of the grievance brought forward by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and, assuming it to be well-founded, the number of people whom it affects. As the discussion has gone on, hon. Members must have been led to suppose that it was a grievance affecting a very large class.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I mentioned the number—200.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I did not say the debate was so initiated, but that as it went on one might have gained that impression. As the hon. and gallant Member is aware, that is not the case. The case he has put before the Committee is that of certain male telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office in London. It is not even the case of all the male telegraphists at that office. What is it about which hon. Members have complained? That in a description of the terms offered to intending candidates there was a statement that, after reaching a certain maximum, they would have a prospect of proceeding to £190 a year. It is upon that phrase that the charge of breach of faith is based. That phrase was in use only for a certain time.

* MR. HAY: For how long?

CAPTAIN NORTON: For nine years.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Between 1881 and 1890. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, and the hon. Member for Hoxton, have both spoken as if in the course of those years no improvement had been made in the position of these telegraphists. I am certain they could not have intended to convey anything of the kind. Anyone familiar with the history of the question would know that repeatedly, since the earlier date I have named, better pay and conditions have been granted to these men. It was on the occasion of one of these improvements in pay under the Raikes scheme in 1890 that the circular in question had to be withdrawn, and the words have not since been used.

* MR. HAY: Would the hon. Member state what the improvements were?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (after quoting the scales and remuneration under the schemes which came into operation in 1881 and 1890 respectively, continued): Those men who joined the service between 1881 and 1890 were the only persons who, in any case, could complain of a breach of faith. It could, therefore, only be in regard to those men that under any circumstances this alleged breach of faith could have occurred. The promise was that they had a prospect of rising to £190. The hon. Member said this offer was an unfair one. I suppose it would not be unfair to say that an officer joining the British Army has a prospect of becoming a field-marshal, but that does not mean that every officer will become a field-marshal, or even a general. This was put before them as a prospect to which some of

them might attain. I think that the Committee will see that under these circumstances the telegraphists never received a definite pledge that they would have this £190.

CAPTAIN NORTON thought the Secretary to the Treasury was in error, because prior to that, all these men rose regularly and systematically to £160.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The fact that these men's predecessors, even if it were true, attained positions which they have not attained, does not justify this demand. The question is, whether these men have attained to the promotion which they were promised. In the first place, I say that there was no such promise. All they were told was that there was a prospect of rising to £190, which was beyond the scale set out. The very words chosen showed that all of them would not reach that amount, and they had no right to complain. If there are now the same proportion of men on the scale as when the circular was issued, surely there can be no ground of complaint. I am trying to put the case as frankly and as fairly as I can. I do not wish to leave any doubt in the mind of the Committee as to the exact point at issue between us, and I wish to meet the point fairly. The question is whether the prospect of attaining this higher position has become worse than it was. The hon. and gallant Member for West Newington has assumed that I shall endeavour to escape from the meshes by some disingenuous subterfuge. I will, however, do my best to meet the case fairly. Under Mr. Fawcett's scheme the number of situations above the maximum limit of £160 was 168; and it bore a proportion to the total number of telegraphists below the senior class of one to six and a third. In 1890 the proportion was exactly the same. At the present time the total number above the limit is 349, and the number below is 2,076, according to the latest figures. I ought just to say that I am not quite certain that my figures are up to date, but they are the most recent, and I think the proportion is practically the same at the present time.

*MR. HAY asked if the overseers were included.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, they are included. As I have just stated, the total number above the limit is 349, and the total below is 2,076, so that the number of those who have risen to £190 is practically the same as it was.

CAPTAIN NORTON pointed out that the Department was growing.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, but if the proportion remains exactly the same the total must be increasing.

*MR. HAY asked if the total number given included senior telegraphists who had risen this year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, I am comparing the number of those not rising above £160 with the number who are over £160. All that the Government ever held out to these men was a prospect of a certain number of them attaining something beyond the ordinary maximum of their class, and I say that the number of them who have passed that limit is the same proportion to the total number now as it was in the past. I think those who have been good enough to follow me will see that, when reduced to its proper limits, there is a very slender foundation for so grave a charge as one of breach of faith on the part of a great Government Department towards its servants. Hon. Members have urged that it is to the interest of the Government that its servants should be contented and satisfied. I need hardly say that there is no one who feels that more than the responsible Ministers concerned. We have endeavoured, and we are endeavouring, to treat all cases of grievances, alleged or proved, fairly and impartially. We are doing our best to remedy grievances where they are shown to exist and where they are well founded. We are trying to make such improvements from time to time, in pay and conditions of employment, in the postal and other services, as the circumstances of the case justify. I do not think, however, that contentment in the public service is promoted by the annual recurrence of debates of this kind, or by making in this House

allegations of such gravity on such a very slight foundation. I deprecate the using of this House for purposes of that kind, and I wish hon. Members would persuade themselves that there is no one who is more desirous of doing justice to employees than the head of a great public Department; and there is nothing which is easier for the heads of any Department to do than to give way, not at their own expense but at somebody else's expense, to any demands which may be addressed to them, and in that way a Minister might purchase for himself or his representatives in this House a peaceful and quiet life and the applause of hon. Gentlemen who have spoken; he could easily do this by making free with the taxpayers' money. But we have a duty to the taxpayers as well as to our employees. We have no more right to pay extravagant wages to our employees than we should have if we were directors of a company with the interests of the shareholders to guard. We have to guard the interests of the taxpayers of the country I have never set up the interests of the taxpayers as a defence against paying fair wages, and I will never attempt to justify what my hon. friend calls making a Department of State "the chief and prime sweater of the country." Nevertheless, because we are dealing with public money I do not think we ought to be more lax in our administration than we should be if we were dealing with our own money. I will only say in conclusion upon this point that my hon. friend the Member for South Islington placed his case on a footing on which I cannot accept it, because he says that these men are entitled to a continuance of the same right of access to the higher positions which they had when they entered the service. I claim to have shown that they now have exactly the same access to the higher positions as they had when they entered the service.

My hon. friend the Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool entered upon a wider question. I hardly know whether it arises on this particular Amendment or not. The hon. Member once more urged upon us the necessity of reviewing the findings of the Tweedmouth Committee by means of a further Committee of inquiry to be conducted by Members of this House, and he prejudged the relative merits of the two Committees by distinguishing a Committee of this House from the Tweedmouth Committee as being an impartial Committee. Upon what grounds does my hon. friend dispute the impartiality of the Tweedmouth Committee? A distinguished Member of the other House, who had no inducement or interest to be unduly hard upon postal employees, acted as Chairman; and for the rest the Committee was composed of public officials of the highest standing, only one of whom was connected with the Post Office administration, and than whom I venture to say we could find no abler or more careful men and thorough inquirers either inside or outside of this House, wherever we might go. This Committee devoted day after day to the consideration of every grievance which the postal employees could put before them, and they heard evidence to the fullest extent. Their inquiries extended over something like a year and a half, and a Member of that Committee told me that it very nearly upset the organisation of every other Government Department that their heads of Departments should be taken away in order to devote so much time to this Post Office question. They carried out the most impartial and careful inquiry that could possibly be held, and they recommended a series of changes which have resulted in imposing upon the taxpayers of this country an additional burden of something like £500,000 a year. Since the sittings of that Committee the postal and telegraph expenditure has increased in a much faster ratio than it did before, and has increased, I think I am right in saying, faster than the revenue derived. When I consider the great concessions that were made, and the great burden that was placed upon the taxpayers, the care that was given to that inquiry, and the opportunity that was afforded to every one to have their grievances heard, I cannot pretend to think that a case has been made out for trying—not fresh matters, but for retrying the same matters and changing the tribunal, merely because all its decisions were not agreeable to one of the parties concerned. I hope the House will not do anything so fatal to the

efficiency and the organisation of our Civil Service, as to allow any large body of civil servants to think that they have only to be importunate enough to secure in this House repeated inquiries into their grievances, no matter what previous care has been given to their consideration. I trust the House will have confidence in the desire of the Postmaster General to deal fairly with all his employees, and believe me when I say that there is nothing easier for us to do than to give way; and that it is only because we believe it to be our duty to the taxpayers that we find it necessary to refuse these recurring and increasing demands.

(5.22.) MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said the Secretary to the Treasury had carefully evaded the point at issue. The question was whether a certain number of telegraphists were to have their maximum salary raised from £160 to £190 a year. He contended that the concessions made by the Tweedmouth Committee imposed no additional burdens upon the taxpayers, for all that this Committee did was to allocate a small portion of the extra profit made by the Post Office amongst the Post Office servants who made that profit. Surely that was not imposing an additional burden upon the taxpayers. Notwithstanding what the Secretary to the Treasury had said, he considered that the House of Commons was the proper place to discuss the grievances of the Post Office employees. In regard to the grievances themselves, what was the central fact of the case? That men and women employed by the State in the telegraphic and other services were paid less than the same class of employees performing similar duties in the employ of private firms. Take for example, the case already mentioned — that of the Eastern Telegraph Company. Under the Post Office a lad entering the telegraph service has attained at the age of twenty-one a wage of 22s. per week of forty-eight hours, which is about 5½d. an hour, but under the Eastern Telegraph Company, and other similar concerns, when he has attained the age of twenty-one his wage is 36s. per week. Further a young man under these private concerns would rise by annual increments of £12, until he he had attained a maximum of £204, whereas under the Government employ he would only rise by annual increments of £5 4s., the maximum being practically £150. There they had the true point at issue, if every Government Department was bound by the fair wages Resolution of this House. Every Department is under obligation by the decision of this House to become a model employer, and the point of dispute in connection with this Amendment is that in this connection the Government, instead of being a model employer, occupied as the hon. Member for Hoxton put it, the position of a sweating employer and that was the ground on which he and his hon. friends supported the Amendment. He trusted that Members on both sides of the House who were interested in efficiency in the public service, would see to it that the employees in this special Department of the service of the State were at least placed on terms of equality with those of private concerns. Unless that was done, inevitably the result would be that all the best men in the Telegraph Department would drift into the service of the private companies, leaving only the inferior men to carry out the work of the State. He trusted that the desire which had been shown by the hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench would not be lost sight of. The point was that the employees of the Government should be brought up to the standard of those who were connected with private concerns.

(5.27.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that after the clear, fair, and candid statement of the Secretary of the Treasury, the regret sometimes expressed that the Postmaster General was not a member of this House need no longer be entertained. His hon. friend was entitled to every credit for the candour of his statement. This Amendment was founded on the assumption that the Government ought to be what was called a "model employer." That meant that the Government was to pay higher wages than it could get the work done for. Nobody could possibly dispute that the Government could get the work done at the wages paid at present. He did not think that any Government work was done absolutely satisfactorily, and

the sole question was whether the Government was to be called upon to pay more than it could get the work done for, in order to earn the character of a model employer. Let no hon. Member think that he was in favour of low wages. He believed the true principle would be to pay the highest possible wages for the most strenuous possible work, and to turn out any man who was not capable or willing to give the best work for the highest wages. If that principle could be applied to the Government Departments, it would possibly get rid of one-fourth of the employees. His ideal would be that the Government, of all employers, should pay the highest possible rate of wages and insist upon the most strenuous work, and get rid of those who were too old, or too weak, or were incapable to do work of that kind. But that was really not a possible or practicable policy at the present time for the Government. Hon. Members knew perfectly well that the position in the Government service was "slack work." If they went down to a dockyard, they would see among five or six labourers that there would be three or four standing idle. He fancied that the telegraph men were kept pretty hard at work, but the theory of those who took to Government employment was that they had obtained a sort of privilege, and that they were not obliged to use that strenuous labour which they would have to use in the service of a private employer. He thought that the term that the State should be a "model employer" was altogether misleading. He would much rather that it was a model Government than a model employer of labour, because, after all, hon. Members must remember that if the Government had duties to those whom it employed, it had greater, more extensive, and higher duties to those for whom it was trustee. It could not be as generous with the money of the taxpayers as private employers were with their own. So far from the position of the Government being that of a more generous employer than a private individual, the contrary was true. A private individual could do what he would with his own, but the Government was not at liberty to act in that way. The Government was purely the trustee for those on whom it levied taxes, and, therefore, it was less at liberty to be what was called a model employer. It was perfectly clear that the Government was paying wages, to the employees now in question, which sufficed to get men to do the work which was required. It was perfectly notorious that if there were any places open, there was no difficulty in filling them up. That showed that the wages were not, on the whole, inadequate.

The whole of this debate raised once again the very serious question of the way in which civil servants were using their electoral power in order to bring pressure to bear on this House. He was aware that many hon. Members, who brought forward the position of servants of the State, did so against their own desires, because of the almost irresistible pressure placed upon them by the servants of the State who were at the same time electors. He hoped he should not be thought to be deficient in sympathy for those who received low wages in the service of the State, amongst whom he should certainly not include the telegraphists. If Government employees continued to exercise influence on those who sat in this House, he thought the question would become a very grave one, and he was afraid the House would have to consider whether it should not revert to the old constitutional principle, and disfranchise every man employed by the State. He hoped it would not come to that, but if it did it would be in consequence of this increasing pressure. He supported the Secretary to the Treasury in resisting this particular Amendment, because it was one of many which tended to illustrate a form of tyranny that was becoming unbearable, and which tended seriously to injure the character of this House as making its Members the advocates of classes, sections, and little communities instead of being trustees not for them alone, but for the whole community.

*(5.35.) MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said he could speak from a fairly long experience, and thought he could say that, outside any legitimate grievance, these men no more influenced or brought

pressure to bear upon Parliamentary representatives than any other constituents in the country. If he might say so the hon. Member for King's Lynn had a bee in his bonnet on this particular question. They had heard his views expressed over and over again. There was one statement he had made he thought he must contradict, and in support of that contradiction he would give him evidence which would be endorsed by the Secretary to the Admiralty. The hon. Member for King's Lynn said that when they went into a dockyard——

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I allowed the hon. Gentleman to use that simile, but not to discuss it.

*MR. KEARLEY said his was a simile also. The hon. Gentleman had pointed out that when they went into a dockyard they saw there perhaps half a dozen men, and they would find at least three or four of them standing idle. The Secretary to the Admiralty could give a denial to that and so could the Secretary to the Treasury, who had filled the position of Civil Lord to the Admiralty. Both hon. Gentlemen had had large experience of Government employees. How was it that in the Dockyards they got their ships built cheaper than in any private shipyards? They knew the hon. Member for King's Lynn was an advocate of the old detestable policy of "The devil take the hindmost." The hon. Member believed in what was called supply and demand, and said that the Government could get these postal employees at this price, and why should they pay more? And then, because their case was brought forward in the House of Commons in a constitutional manner, he said, "If I had my way, I would disfranchise the whole lot."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I did not say that. What I said was that if this kind of thing continued the House would have to consider whether it should not revert to the old constitutional principle, and disfranchise every man employed by the State.

*MR. KEARLEY said he did not think there was much difference between the statement he had made and that of the hon. Gentleman opposite. These questions would continue to be brought forward in that House by the people's representatives. If the hon. Member was anxious to bring to a stop the bringing forward of these grievances by the Parliamentary representatives of these men, let him carry out his suggestion and propose a Resolution to disfranchise the Government employees throughout the country. The hon. Member was one of the most ingenious Parliamentarians in the House, and there were many methods known to him by means of which he could bring forward a Resolution. He invited the hon. Member, not merely to make these aspersions on men who were not able to protest in person, but to give the House an opportunity of voting, and he thought he would find himself in one of those minorities of which he had experience in the past. He was perfectly sure the hon. Gentleman's views were singular and exceptional, and would find no echo among Members.

(5.42.) CAPTAIN NORTON said the debate had gone completely off the line. He reminded the Committee that his statement had nothing to do with the broad question of the living wage. His contention was that the Government had been guilty of a breach of faith, inasmuch as they had issued a statement that the salaries would rise by certain gradations to a maximum of £190, and now they had placed the men in a position which prevented them by any possibility rising to that amount. There were still 200 men to whom the Government had given a distinct pledge, and the Government stood convicted of a breach of faith towards them.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that, having been in the public service himself, he wished to say a few words. He sympathised with all legitimate grievances, but he desired to associate himself with the protest of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury against the continual applications which were being received, and the pressure which was being put on Members of Parliament from the public service. It was, of course, a very pleasant

thing to advocate increases of pay to everybody. He should like to advocate that himself. He also agreed that the State should be a model employer, and that it should pay well, but it should do so in a reasonable manner and not pay fictitiously higher prices than would be obtained in other similar walks of life. If the pay of Post Office telegraphists was compared with the pay of men similarly engaged in private employment, it would be found to be higher. If it were not, it would be extraordinary that, on every vacancy, a large number of persons desired to get in. He did not wish to throw cold water on any person's real grievances, but he thought it was rather amusing that while they were always complaining of increasing taxation, they should at the same time be advocating extremely liberal salaries. He thought such debates were injurious to the public service, and tended to demoralise it. If real grievances existed they ought certainly to be redressed. They ought not even to trust to the Government to put them right, but in those days of the Press, he thought every Government would act rightly towards persons employed by the State. But, as the hon. Member for King's Lynn had said, if the present system continued, and if these grievances were to be a continual source of agitation in the House, he was sure it would tend to demoralise and injure the public service.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): What evidence is there of that?

MR. BARTLEY: The hon. Member asked him what evidence there was of that, but he knew as much about the public service as the hon. Member, as he had been twenty years in it, and he knew also the effect of such debates on the staff. Men clamoured to get into the public service, and some of them, as soon as they were in, clamoured for an increase of pay. He had a great many civil servants in his constituency—he respected them very much—and he believed the bulk of them were satisfied. But there were also an enormous number of clerks earning about the same salaries in private employment; and he had no hesitation in saying that the advantages in salary, pension, and in other ways of the public service were much greater than could be obtained in private employment. He knew the case of a man who was in private employment for forty years, and was not receiving anything like what he would have had in the public service, and he was told at one or two days notice that he must leave without a pension or anything else. The public service was fairly liberal. He thought grievances should be redressed, but he did say that continual agitation on every occasion, and the putting of pressure on Members of Parliament, was dangerous, and tended to injure the public service.

(5.48.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 165. Division List, No. 118.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P (Glouc., Stroud
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bond, Edward
Brigg, John
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Campbell John (Armagh, S.)
Carew, James Laurence
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Jones, David Brynm'r (Swansea
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Leamy, Edmund
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, Dr E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Norton and Mr. Claude Hay.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (City of Lond.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth)
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt. Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Renwick, George

Ridley, Hon. M. W (Stalybridge
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Cl. A. C. E (Taunton
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

(6.0.) MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) urged upon the Government the need of an alternative cable between the Island of Lewis and the Mainland. He said it had not fallen to his lot to thank any Minister for much, but on this occasion he was pleased to be able to thank the Secretary to the Post Office for the pains he had taken to repair the cable from Lewis to Stornaway. There were 30,000 people on the Island of Lewis, and it was most essential that there should not be these breakdowns in cable communication between the island and the mainland, which had the result of dislocating all business. He therefore hoped that the Post Office would see their way, in order to guard against these constant breakdowns, to laying another cable between Stornaway and Lewis. He also suggested that the charge for the registered tele graphic addresses should be increased from one guinea to two guineas, which he thought would have the effect of greatly increasing the telegraph revenue. He also complained of the insanitary state of the telegraph offices, which he stated was most serious, and which he believed was the cause of a large number of the cases of illness among the telegraph operators and employees, and he hoped that the insanitary telegraph offices would very soon be placed in a sanitary condition.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said he took this opportunity of drawing attention to the frequent breakdown in winter of the telegraphic service between Scotland and London. He frankly admitted the great efficiency with which the Post Office did its work, and the manner in which the heads of Departments conducted their business, but he pointed out that for a long period during the last winter, telegraphic communication with Scotland was interrupted, that owing to the severity of the weather, the snowstorms and the gales, and the wrecking of the telegraph post, the condition of things was such that telegraphic communication between London and Scotland was suspended, and that on several occasions, telegrams to Scotland from London had to be sent via New York. The Chambers of Commerce of Scotland had communicated with the Post Office, but they did not receive an entirely satisfactory reply. The Government said they did not see their way to make any change within any definite time, but had confined themselves to general promises. Between London and the Midlands means had been taken to obviate these difficulties, and in view of that fact he drew attention to the state of affairs in Scotland in order to impress upon the hon. Gentleman the necessity of giving to Scotland a similar service to that which had been given to the Midlands. If the business had been in the hands of a private company a second set of wires would have been put up long ago. He desired to impress the hon. Gentleman with the necessity for dealing with this matter at once. The expenditure, no doubt, would be great, but money could be borrowed at a low rate of interest, and every penny spent would mean extra revenue. If the Post Office wished the Telegraph Service to yield the revenue they expected, they would have to be prepared to spend money freely, to alter their plans, and not use things which were liable to these checks and breakdowns. This was a serious matter, and he hoped it would receive the earnest consideration of the hon. Gentleman. He would not move

a reduction now, but only in the event of his not obtaining a satisfactory answer.

*(6.10.) SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee) said he supported the hon. Gentleman opposite in the complaint he made with regard to the interruption of telegraphic communication, which was very inconvenient to the people of Scotland. Telegraphic communication was to the Body Politic what the nervous system was to the human body, and any interruption to that meant nothing less than paralysis. When on former occasions he adverted to this subject, the replies he had received were always to the effect that the delays were exceptional and caused by exceptional storms. The experience, however, of the last two years had gone to show that these storms were by no means exceptional, but occurred with regularity year after year in the depth of the winter The fact of the matter was that the telegraph poles were found to be too weak. The Post Office strengthened the poles. but having done that, they proceeded to multiply the number of wires they had to carry, with the natural consequence that whenever a gale of wind or heavy falls of snow occurred, the poles were not able to carry the weight of the wires. Last November and December the stoppages had been worse than ever. According to the reply given by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Post Office to Questions put by the hon. Member for Newcastle and himself, in December last the wires between Newcastle and Glasgow were interrupted for four days, during which time there were no telegrams, either private or business, and it might be said that as far as telegraphic communication was concerned, Scotland was shut from the whole of the civilised world. The newspapers were without their ordinary telegraphic communication; they were without the financial reports, and all that class of information for which business, men look first in the morning. This was bad business on the part of the Department. The duty of the Department was to maintain steady, regular, and uninterrupted telegraphic communication. Its failure to do that implied a failure of its ideas and of its application of the proper ways and means to fulfil the purposes for which it was established.

The Financial Secretary had admitted that this was an important question so far as revenue was concerned. The loss of revenue in November was £2,500, and in December £5,500. But a more important point was that of repairs. These were estimated to cost in November £2,500 and in December no less than £27,000, or a total loss to the Department, in revenue and repairs, of £37,500. The loss to the Department, however, was as nothing compared with the loss to the business men of the country. So important to business men was this question, that a very influential deputation, composed of gentlemen representing the Chambers of Commerce in the North-East of England and the whole of Scotland, and other business men, waited upon the Postmaster General in March last. The Postmaster General did not deny the importance of the subject; he agreed as to the desirability of these interuptions and delays being prevented by the laying down of underground wires; and he referred to the fact that a subterranean cable had for some time been working satisfactorily between London and Birmingham, intimating that this was about to be extended to Stafford and then to Warrington, where it would join the existing cable between Manchester and Liverpool. He also stated that the laying of a section beyond Preston, a distance of only thirty miles, was contemplated during the present year with a view to its ultimate extension to Scotland. Next Winter there would probably be other storms similar to those of November and December last; the whole of Scotland, with the North of England, would be again cut off for days from the civilised world; they would e, to use a telegraphic word, insulated. To the Postmaster General the question was apparently one of cost. The expenditure on the Birmingham underground wire had been £165,000, and it was calculated the extension to Glasgow would cost £700,000. Assuming the £165,000 had to be deducted from that, it left a balance of little more than £500,000. According to the Postmaster General, this was more a Treasury than

a Post Office matter, and the noble Lord felt a difficulty in asking for the necessary grant in consequence of the heavy burdens under which the country was labouring by reason of the war in South Africa. But whatever difficulty the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have, the Postmaster General ought to present to the Treasury the whole case in the strongest possible terms, leaving with them the responsibility for the answer they gave. The complaint of business men generally was that the Postmaster General should feel this difficulty about the expenditure of half a million to complete the underground system to Scotland. In two months the Department had lost £37,500 in revenue and the cost of repairs. a sum which represented far more than the interest on £1,000,000. He contended that there ought to be no hesitation in regard to this expenditure, especially seeing it was reproductive. At a time when the money of the nation was going to South Africa at the rate of £1,000,000 a week, it was most unwise there should be this parsimony in regard to an item of reproductive expenditure amounting to only £500,000. Everyone enjoyed the advantage of telegraphic communication, and everyone suffered inconvenience and often pecuniary loss if that communication was not maintained.

He also desired to refer to the attitude of the Post Office towards the adoption of wireless telegraphy. What was the Department doing to encourage its adoption by arranging communication with the Marconi stations? The Marconi system had been adopted by the great Transatlantic and German lines, with conspicuous advantage. The Admiralty had shown their appreciation of the system by adopting it on 130 ships in His Majesty's Navy. But, as far as he could discover, the Post Office had done nothing to link on their system of wires with the Marconi stations. In this matter he did not wish to blame so much the Postmaster General or the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. In several respects they had shown an advanced and enlightened spirit, and had not stood in the way of important reforms. But there were permanent officials in the Department who might better be described as permanent obstructionists, and who did not exhibit that readiness to adopt one of the most important scientific inventions of the age which might have been expected of them. The system would materially facilitate telegraphic communication in the merchant service and the Navy, with lighthouse stations, and also between the islands of Scotland, where, in bad weather, it was very important there should be some such means of communication. The attitude of the officials of the Telegraph Department towards wireless telegraphy was almost precisely that of the Admiralty in the early part of the last century when they ridiculed the proposals of Henry Bell, the inventor of the application of steam to navigation. as being impracticable and unworthy of consideration. Lord Nelson, a man of genius, strongly urged them to adopt steam navigation, but they declined; and Henry Bell was compelled to address his offers to foreign Powers, with the result that America placed a steamer on the Hudson River before one was placed on the Clyde. It was to be hoped the Post Office would not have a similarly disgraceful record in this matter, but that they would show they were awake to the progress of science and its practical application.

(6.35.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) called the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury to the importance of guarding against telegraphic communication with Scotland being interrupted, and especially commented on the exposed position of the wires on the East coast. The interruption of telegraphic business for three or four days which occurred last Winter was a very serious misfortune. Already the considerable loss incurred by this interruption of communication had been referred to. The Post Office had undertaken to supply underground wires in some parts of England, and he thought there was much stronger reason for taking this course in regard to the wires communicating with Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Dundee, which were so liable to disturbance. There was no part of the United Kingdom subject to more severe and protracted snowstorms than the country between Fife and Aberdeen.

which affected not only the telegraph wires but also the railroads; and so it might happen that the whole of that district and the towns of Aberdeen and Moray might become entirely isolated for a considerable period. It was true that there were telegraphic lines running across that part of Scotland to the West, but even these were very liable to snowstorms and might frequently be interrupted. He thought those hon. Members who realised what telegraphic communication meant would feel that his hon. friend had put a very strong case. This was a matter which had excited the greatest possible interest in the North East of Scotland, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would make a beginning in Scotland. With regard to the Marconi system, his hon. friend had not mentioned one country with which they had great difficulty in commun cating on account of the enormous expense of laying cables. He referred to Iceland. By the Marconi system communication might be established with Iceland at a small expense. He thought their meteorological service would be more complete if it included Iceland and was connected with it by telegraphic communication. In that way they would be able to render a considerable service to agriculturists.

(6.42.) MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In reply to the hon. Member for Dundee, I am bound to say that he has made himself so well acquainted with what has passed between the Postmaster General and the deputation that waited upon him that I am afraid I cannot add to the knowledge which the hon. Member already possesses. There are one or two remarks which I should like to make in reference to what fell from my hon. friend the Member for Camlachie and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen. No one will dispute the enormous importance which uninterrupted telegraphic facilities have come to possess in the organisation of our modern life, and it is a great proof of the services rendered to the country that the interruption of telegraphic facil ties is so severely felt. The problem is not quite such a simple one as is supposed. I have listened with horror and dismay to the suggestion that the Post Office has, in some way, favoured the Midlands or English towns, and refused the same favours to Scotland. The events of the last two years have been quite exceptional in the experience of the Post Office. Over a period of ten years before that, the expenditure required for repairs has been only a little over £3,000. During the last year and the year before there were altogether abnormal storms, causing abnormal damage, affecting the communication with Scotland especially. The only reason why the country between London and Birmingham was taken for the first experiment for underground wires was because it was found that that district was very liable to be interrupted. Winds sweeping across the Midlands cause some of the most important interruptions of communication between Scotland and the South, and the Post Office dealt first with the districts that suffered most, and we shall proceed with such extensions as will give the greatest advantage to the whole service. Naturally the Post Office Department is anxious to press on with the work as rapidly as possible, and we are devoting £30,000 to it this year—not so much as I could wish, but the money will be spent for the advantage of northern communication, and not in favour of any particular district on the way to Scotland. The enormous importance to Scotland of telegraphic communication is fully recognised, and the desire of the Post Office is to render the system secure as soon as that can be done. It is quite possible that in another year disturbances may require expenditure on cables in the South-West and South-East, whence traffic to the Continent goes, and cables in all parts of the Kingdom have to be considered.

But even with these underground cables we are not able to do away with the overhead wires, and we do not get rid of that expense. In our present state of knowledge we cannot do all our business by underground cables. I am not an expert on the subject, but I am informed that there are several forms of telegraphy which cannot be conducted by underground cables. Underground cables, though cheapened and improved by science, are still very costly, and less satisfactory in working than overhead wires. Therefore we are obliged under

any circumstances to keep overhead wires going, and we do not get that relief which Members have held out as an inducement to proceed with the laying of underground cables. The hon. Gentleman opposite has stated that after all we make a great profit from the telegraph, and we ought to be well content to spend a little money to guard our revenue and protect our customers against the risk of interruption. I wish we did make a profit. I am most anxious, speaking for the Treasury, to give to the Post Office a fair share, a not ungenerous share, of any additional profits made, to go to the improvement of any portion of the service the Postmaster General may think desirable. It is often difficult for a Secretary to the Treasury to do full justice to the cause of the Postmaster General in this House, but I never feel more difficulty in having to defend the Estimates than when I have to put forward Treasury views perhaps not wholly those of the Postmaster General. I think it would be fair to say, taking the average over a number of years of the amount the Post Office and telegraphic services have respectively contributed to the State for the last few years, there is half of the additional profit to go to the revenue and the remainder to be at the disposition of the Postmaster General, but the difficulty is that the telegraph service has no profit, and not only so, it makes a loss.

MR. BRYCE said that part of the loss was probably due to these interruptions.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is perfectly true, but if the right hon. Gentleman means to imply that the loss will be likely to be recovered, and that we shall be likely to do better if we spend all this money, that is not so. We can carry on a certain amount of traffic during the interruption, but the amount stopped is, after all, a very small figure. In the worse week of last year the reduction in the number of telegrams was only 6 per cent. on the total figure. That is serious enough, and I do not say it is satisfactory; but the right hon. Gentleman opposite must not suppose that there is untold wealth to be got out of this provision against interruptions, and he must bear in mind the fact that our expenses for maintaining overhead wires will have to go on after the underground cables are laid. Therefore, the position is not quite so strong as the hon. Member for Camlachie and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen would naturally suppose. At the same time, I share the desire of the Postmaster General to go on with this work as rapidly as possible; but, on the other hand, the Committee must recognise that the present financial year, with the proposals the Chancellor of the Exchequer has had to make, is not a promising occasion for coming for a great increase in telegraphic expenditure without any great increase of revenue. We are bound to have some regard to the general condition of the finance of the country, and I do not think we should be justified in very largely increasing expenditure this year, or in borrowing largely, having regard to the great needs of the Government in other ways. The figure is £30,000 altogether, which would be quite an inadequate figure if it were to be taken as the measure of our normal rate of progress. I hope that the circumstances of next year will be more prosperous, and that they will enable us to make more progress. I assure the Committee that we do not underrate the importance of the question, and that we shall not forget it in the framing of next year's Estimates.

(6.55.) MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he sympathised with the statement of the Financial Secretary of the Treasury that the sums allowed for underground cables for several years past had been very small. He did not urge the extension of the underground system on the ground that it would pay, but he did urge it as an absolute necessity in order to prevent the chaos in business arrangements in the great centres in Scotland which resulted when these great disasters occurred. He urged this also because neither the Treasury nor the Post Office should place reliance on the probability of fine weather. Last year they were particularly fortunate, but in many parts of the country the telegraph wires were interrupted more or less every year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The cost for repairs has averaged £3,000 over the whole country for the ten years to which I referred. Storms do not always occur in the same districts, and the situation is difficult to ascertain.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said that owing to the growth of the number of telegraph wires used for business transactions any interruption of the service by storms was the more readily felt. It was often supposed that the wires were blown down or that trees fell across them, but as a matter of fact it was neither wind nor trees that brought them down. The damage was caused by snow freezing on them.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is very rare. It was nearly always the effect of outside objects falling across the wires.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON thought there was some misapprehension on this matter. He lived in a part of the country where he had opportunities of acquiring information on this subject. He had great respect for the opinion of the Telegraph Department engineer, and he readily acknowledged that owing to his exertions a great deal of work had been done in Scotland which had enormously helped the outlying parts of the country; but with regard to the damage done by storms he could state thatafter a bad snowstorm they might go through hundreds of miles of the country and find the wires lying down. He was best acquainted with what happened in the case of the wires along the Highland line, where they were more open than anywhere else. It was done simply by the snow. With regard to those parts of the north country which were more exposed to snowstorms than the south, it would be a mistake to suppose that the interruptions were caused by wind. A deputation waited on the Postmaster General the other day, and very general regret was expressed that the Financial Secretary of the Treasury was not able to be present. The reply given would have been more satisfactory with regard to the extension of the underground system if some date had been fixed on which they might count as the time when the Department would be prepared to undertake the further extension of the wires. In the reply which the Postmaster General gave to the deputation which recently waited on him there was no assurance offered by the noble Lord that anything more was intended than to supply the needs of the North of England. What they would like to know was whether the Department would extend the wires farther north. The repeated interruption of the system was an intolerable nuisance in cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh; and they brought this proposal forward as a provision which was absolutely necessary to the great centres of industry.

*(7.0.) SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.) asked whether the Post Office had any definite scheme for carrying on continuously this work of underground cable extension to its conclusion. At present they had no definite promise that it would be carried beyond the North of England. It would be satisfactory to the people of Edinburgh and Glasgow to know whether there was a definite time within which they might count upon having the cable brought to those places.

(7.1.) MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said it was quite true that the Financial Secretary of the Treasury had spoken sympathetically in a general way, but he had given no definite promise that he was going to undertake this work. He made this reform dependent on various other matters which involved the putting of it off to a more convenient season. Apparently one reason on which to some extent the reform was to be dependent was whether there was or was not a profit from the telegraph service. He thought the Secretary to the Treasury has very much underestimated the importance of the question, which was a long-standing grievance and one which involved large sums of money. So long as he remembered there had been interruptions of the telegraph system, and the Post Office should long ago have taken this matter in hand. It so happened that the matter became more urgent in 1890 and 1891. These breakdowns had gone on perodically for many years. The telegraph was not like a

private undertaking. It was a service which existed for the convenience of the public at large. He asked the Committee to consider for a moment what was the loss resulting from these breakdowns. He thought it would not be an overestimate to say that a very large portion of the business of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leith, and other large towns two days loss in 1890 and 1891 through the want of telegraphic communication. It really meant of income represented by more than 1d. in the pound of income tax to that portion of the business community. If that was the position, and he did not think it could be more seriously disputed, it called for redress irrespective of the cost. The matter should be looked at as a whole. These business men had to pay income tax, and it was not good enough for a Member of the Ministry to stand up and say that he was not going to deal with this until he got a profit from the telegraph service, or until a convenient time arose.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: What I said was that the underground communication between London and Birmingham had been taken for the first experiment because that covered the district which was most subject to interruption.

MR. BLACK: Be it so. He was willing to take from the hon. Member that that was the ostensible reason, but if that was his experience in the past it was not necessarily the experience of the future. That was not a good reason why the underground wires should not be extended to towns in Scotland. The Financial Secretary of the Treasury had stated that an underground service of wires would not necessarily be a saving to the Treasury for repairs, because it would still be necessary to maintain the overhead system. In New York it had been made compulsory to put telegraph and telephone wires underground, and he did not think it could be maintained that we practiced more kinds of telegraphy than the people of that state. He suggested that the Financial Secretary of the Treasury might make further inquiry as to whether an underground system might not be established here. The underground wires to Birmingham justified their extension to Scotland, and, as regarded Scotland, they were not altogether like the Midlands of England. The principal centres of industry in Scotland were on the coast, and if Scotland could not have underground land wires they might have a submarine cable system.

(7.10.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES called attention to the present method of stating the accounts together for the telegraph and telephone services, and asked whether, seeing that the telephone service had now become a distinct and expensive service, the Treasury could arrange to have the accounts stated separately in order that they might see what loss or profit arose on the telephone service. In making this suggestion he recognised that the same wires were used to some extent for both services, but he did not think it was right that they should continue to pretend that the telegraph and the telephone were one and the same thing. There was another point on which he should like to get a little information. There had just been issued the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Cable Communications. He did not propose to enter into the whole of that Report, because he thought some portions could more appropriately be discussed in connection with other Votes, but there was one portion which essentially belonged to this Vote. He called attention to two statements on page 34 of the Report, with respect to the working of the submarine cable between England and the Continent. The first was that the Board of Trade granted landing rights in this country, and the second was a suggestion that the powers of the Cable Landing Rights Committee should be enlarged, and that it should be called the Cables Committee, and that the Board of Trade should be relieved of its present responsibility with regard to cable landing rights. Was that course taken, or proposed to be taken?

*MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.) asked if the hon. Gentleman could give the Committee any information as to the relations which existed between the

Post Office and Mr. Marconi or Mr. Marconi's Company. He wished to know particularly how much money had been spent by the Post Office in experiments and other matters connected with wireless telegraphy, and what the country had got in return. It was commonly stated—he had no means of knowing whether it was accurate or not—that the sum was between £30,000 and £40,000. No sum was taken in the Estimates in connection with wireless telegraphy, and there was no means of specifically tracing how much had been spent. He thought, however, it was clear that large sums had been spent, and certainly somebody must have profited. One important Post Office official had recently left the service, and he believed he was right in saying that that gentleman was now engaged in private scientific practice. The country had a right to look for information as to what return it had got for its money, and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman, who was so well informed as regarded the details of his Department, would be able to supply it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he desired to supplement the question of the hon. Member by two further queries. The first was—Was the Post Office aware that it had been stated on good authority that Mr. Marconi was using a master patent which belonged to Professor Lodge of Birmingham? Were the Post Office convinced that that was not the case? Otherwise, if the Post Office purchased Mr. Marconi's system, and it subsequently turned out that the master patent belonged to Professor Lodge, the position would be very awkward. The other question was whether the Government would take a monopoly of wireless or ethereal telegraphy as was taken of ordinary telegraphy?

(7.15.) MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps I may say a few words with reference to the underground cables to Scotland, in reply to the further questions which have been addressed to me. Certainly, it is the intention of the Post Office to continue the cables, not only to Scotland but into Scotland. It is proposed eventually to carry the lines as far as Lanark, whence branches will be laid to Glasgow and Edinburgh. I cannot fix a definite time, and I would ask the Committee to have a little more patience and indulgence, and let us see how we get on next year before I venture to give any date for the completion of the work. The hon. Member for Ross called attention to cable communication with Stornaway. That cable was under repair quite recently, and I hope it will now give an efficient service. I do not think that we could at the present time, as I informed the hon. Member the other day, undertake to duplicate the cable, but whether there are any other means to increase the security of the cable shall be considered. We greatly desire to give Stornaway the best possible service, having regard to the nature of the case. The hon. Gentleman also suggested that we should make some addition to revenue by increasing the fees for registered addresses, and I will commend that suggestion to the Postmaster General's attention. Lastly, he asked me a question with reference to the alleged insanitary condition of Post Office buildings, and he mentioned, in particular, the ravages of consumption among the Post Office staff. The hon. Gentleman will be glad to learn that he is under a misapprehension as to the prevalence of consumption in the Post Office staff. Careful examination and statistics show that the average number affected by consumption between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five is actually greater in the general population than it is in the Post Office staff. Of course the Post Office is continually improving the condition of the more backward offices, and any case of alleged insanitary conditions in any particular office will receive the attention of the Post-Master General, and be at once inquired into. With reference to the question of my hon. friend the Member for Kings Lynn, no attempt has been made as regards the past to distinguish between expenditure on telephones from expenditure on telegraphs. I am not now speaking of capital expenditure, which is quite distinct. I very much regret that that distinction was not made in the accounts. I promised the House that the accounts in regard to the London scheme, which

is our biggest experiment, should be kept separately, and I have been in communication with the Postmaster General as to the form the accounts should take, and as to certain items which must be more or less matters of conjecture, and to determine in what way we can present the most accurate statement of the facts to the House. I am afraid that the telegraph and telephone accounts for the country generally cannot be shown separately. I certainly share my hon. friend's desire that these two services should appear separately, and I shall consider if that is possible. As regards the Cable Communications Committee's Report, which I think was only circulated this morning, I would appeal to my hon. friend that it could be better discussed on the Civil Service Estimates which deal with cable subsidies. It was only during the Easter holidays that I had an opportunity of reading the Report myself, but I have given directions that the recommendations of the Committee should be communicated to the different Departments concerned, and, of course, my hon. friend will understand that I must await their views before expressing a definite opinion on them. *Prima facie* my inclination is to adopt them. Then a question has been raised as regards our relations with the Marconi Company and with Mr. Marconi himself, and concerning wireless telegraphy generally. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Wolverhampton rather suggested that the Post Office has shown too much readiness to facilitate the operations of Mr. Marconi, and that we have been reckless in spending money in promoting Mr. Marconi's researches without any apparent result to the country. Mr. Marconi was given facilities by the Post Office for making experiments with a view to discovering a system of wireless telegraphy. He had already, I think, at that time secured his master patent, but the expense of those experiments was nothing like what the hon. Gentleman was informed it was. He spoke of £30,000 or £40,000; I cannot give him the exact figures, but I think only about £2,000 or £3,000 was spent on these experiments which were made not only for the benefit of Mr. Marconi but for the benefit of the Post Office engineers and electricians, who were themselves along with Professor Lodge and other scientific men devoting their attention to the same problem at the same time as Mr. Marconi. The Post Office made no payments to Mr. Marconi. The use of wireless telegraphy within this country would be an infringement of the Post-master General's monopoly and cannot be undertaken without his licence within the three mile limit.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is that the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, or the result of a legal decision?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is not the result of a legal decision *ad hoc*, so to speak. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to give him the best information I can on the spur of the moment. I think there has been no decision in any case between Mr. Marconi or any one using his patent and the Postmaster General, but a decision in another case established the right of the Postmaster General to a monopoly, and the law was laid down in such a way as to leave no doubt that it would apply to wireless telegraphy, as it was held that the transmission of messages by means of electricity was an infringement of the Postmaster General's monopoly. The hon. Member for Dundee suggested that it should be the duty of the Post Office to establish wireless telegraphy in lighthouses and at different points along the coast for the purpose of receiving messages from sea. The Department will not place any obstacle in the way of that, and I believe arrangements of that kind are being made, not by the Post Office, but by Lloyds, who are the recognised means of communication with the sea. Then the hon. Gentleman for King's Lynn asked me as to the validity of Mr. Marconi's patent, and as to whether we were aware that that validity was questioned. The Postmaster General is well aware of rival claims. He has taken advice on the subject, but I think no advantage would be gained by my making any statement as to the effect of the advice. I can only say that we are well aware that doubts have been raised, and that the subject has received serious consideration. May I ask the Committee

to allow us to take this Vote shortly? There are other Votes down on which hon. Members desire to raise various questions of interest, notice of some of which I have received, and I hope I may induce the Committee to give us an opportunity of discussing them.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): With regard to wireless telegraphy, I may inform the hon. Gentleman that it was in existence in 1837. Wireless telegraphy was invented by Beaumont Lindsay at Dundee in that year, and was accepted by the Royal Institution, and therefore, when entering into negotiations with Mr. Marconi, it is necessary to look into the validity of his patent.

MR. NORMAN asked whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would inquire what had been the sum expended by the Post Office in connection with wireless telegraphy, and what had been the result.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was afraid he could not do that. The experts of the Post Office were themselves conducting a series of experiments when Mr. Marconi appeared on the scene and asked for facilities. These the Postmaster General gave, of course himself securing a knowledge of the results obtained. Perhaps he might be able to find the whole sum expended, and he could not earmark the expenditure which was incurred at the suggestion of Mr. Marconi. But the whole sum was much less than the hon. Gentleman suggested.

Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £5,961,815 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1903, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post Office Revenue."

(7.32) MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said he rose to move a reduction of £100 on the salary of the Postmaster General in order to call attention to certain grievances of the officials of the Post Office. The Post Office officials and also the telegraphists had long standing grievances, and those grievances were rather increasing than diminishing. These officials had offered in perfect good faith to accept the decision of a Committee of the House of Commons if they were allowed to bring their grievances properly before it. He thought it would be wise for the Government to accept this offer of the Post Office officials. Both the Post Office and the Telegraph Department were great trading concerns, and as great trading concerns they should treat their officials in the same way as other great trading concerns treated theirs. He thought there should be a Court of Appeal for these men, and that should be the House of Commons alone, and when any dispute arose this House should constitute itself the Court of Appeal in the matter. As the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote had said, this was not a question of extravagant wages, but it was a question of a fair living wage, and the House of Commons had a right to decide what a fair living wage was. The Government itself published a Report every year showing the change in the rate of wages. That was published by the Board of Trade Department, and that Report stated that apart from agricultural labourers, seamen, and railway servants, 1,136,000 work people had gained an average rise in their weekly wage of 3s. 6d. per week in four years. It further stated that in the same period the increase of wages of the manual labouring class had been about a shilling per head. That information was in the Government's possession, and he did not see why the Post Office officials should not come in for their proper share of the prosperity of the country. He thought the House of Commons should accept the offer which had been made by the Post Office officials, and that their grievances should be investigated by a Committee. He thought these grievances, if not recognised and treated in a spirit of absolute fair play in the way in which other great trading concerns dealt with their servants in a kind and conciliatory manner, these grievances would become a source of greater trouble in the future. If this friction went on increasing greater trouble

would come out of this matter. There was now an opportunity for the House of Commons to end it for ever by accepting the terms and conditions which had been suggested. If those terms were accepted and a strong Committee of the House appointed, he felt convinced in his own mind that those who had these grievances, if they could not get what they thought they ought, would loyally abide by the decision of that Committee. It would be a wise act on the part of the Government to meet this question in this way and discuss it with the representatives of the people. We wished to act fairly and honestly to all public servants. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100. Of course, if any indication were given to him that such a Committee as he asked for would be appointed he would immediately withdraw his Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100, in respect of the salary of the Postmaster General."—(*Mr. Thomas Bayley.*)

(7.40) MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said that in the speech which had been made by the hon. Member he had left out of account a very important part of the case. If the Committee which had been asked for should inquire into the grievances of the officials with a view to there being an increase in the salaries of these civil servants, the proposal came with an extraordinary air from the hon. Gentleman opposite, because the Committee could not forget that if these demands were granted it would largely increase the expenditure of the nation, and no suggestion had been made by the hon. Member as to the source from which the money was to come. The position of these men had been compared to that of the railway servants much to the detriment of the Post Office officials. Everybody knew the conditions under which the railway servants worked. He himself had a lively recollection of the Motion which had been moved in that House by the hon. Member for Derby which had for its object the exposure, by means of a Return, of the intolerable conditions under which the railway servants performed their duties. There were other points to be taken into consideration besides those which the hon. Gentleman raised. It was asked that a Select Committee should be appointed, but one could not conceive a body more incompetent or rather less capable of undertaking the duty of such an inquiry than a Select Committee of this House. Nevertheless, he had great sympathy with some of the grievances complained of by the postal servants. He agreed that the time taken by the authorities to return an answer to the requests or representation made to them was very unsatisfactory. He had himself occasion to write to the Postmaster General upon a matter, and on that occasion it was four months before he received a reply. The delay in replying to complaints was very unsatisfactory and unbusinesslike, and it created a suspicion in the minds of civil servants that they were not being fairly dealt with. If the Financial Secretary could see his way to expedite replies when complaints were made, instead of postal servants having to wait three or four months, he would find that, even with his present powers, many of the grievances could be removed, and the agitation at present going on would come to an end. He did not think many of the complaints had much foundation in fact, but some of them had, and those which had arose from the system under which the Post Office was worked, whereby Treasury officials were for ever trying to squeeze the employees wherever possible under the existing rules. He might instance the case of a postal servant being employed on "superior duties" for nine months. He could not be employed on those duties for ten months without his salary being raised, so at the end of nine months he was put back to his old duties, although it was not even pretended by the Post Office that he was incapable of performing the superior duties. Such a system would not be allowed to exist in any business concern in the country. He believed that such cases were few and far between, but they were permitted to be exaggerated by the postal servants themselves because of the delay which continually took place in dealing with them. Whether it was desirable or undesirable to raise the wages now given to these postal servants he did not pretend to say, but it certainly was a most unfortunate moment in the history of the country, when there was a deficit of

£41,000,000 to meet, to ask for an increase of salary involving much cost. The object of this inquiry was not only to obtain the redress of grievances, if they could be proved to exist, but also to secure an increase of salary.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY said he had not asked for any increase of salary for these men.

MR. GALLOWAY asked whether the hon. Member meant that if the Committee recommended an increase of salary that increase of salary should not be given. If so, he could not see the object of the inquiry.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY said he should certainly vote for the Report of the Committee.

MR. GALLOWAY thought that proved his contention to be a perfectly good one. He was not saying that such a decision on the part of a Committee of Inquiry would be wrong, but simply that it was an unfortunate moment at which to make such a demand. If a commercial concern was losing money, a workman would not select that moment to ask for an increase of wages. He would wait until prosperity returned, and then make his request. He hoped the Financial Secretary would adhere to his decision, and that, whether he appointed a Departmental or any other kind of Committee, he would not, at any rate, set up the dangerous precedent of granting a Select Committee of the House of Commons.

(7.57.) MR. KEARLEY said the point which had been urged was, that there should be an independent inquiry into the grievances of these postal employees. Those grievances had been set forth in the House for many years past, but had received no satisfactory redress. As the mover of the Motion which led to the appointment of the Tweedmouth Committee, he might be permitted to say a word or two as to the composition of that body. Unfortunately it was saturated with the official element. Not only was it a packed Committee in that sense, but the Post Office spared no effort to put their case forward, as they were perfectly entitled to do, in the strongest possible way. To onlookers it certainly seemed that it was not a tribunal by which the grievances of the employees would receive an impartial hearing. Undoubtedly, considerable concessions were made by that Committee, and large additions made to the Post Office Vote as the outcome of its recommendations. Still, the feeling of dissatisfaction with regard to its composition was largely responsible for the continuance of the agitation among postal servants. It would be well to get this matter settled one way or the other, and the only way in which that could be done was by the appointment of an independent Committee. He should strongly oppose the appointment of a House of Commons Committee. Such a Committee would not be a proper body to inquire into questions affecting the wages of Government employees. But it was possible to get, outside the House of Commons, an independent Committee which did not consist of postal officials.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN hoped the hon. Member was not under the impression that the Tweedmouth Committee was composed of Post Office officia s, because, as a matter of fact, there was only one such official on it.

MR. KEARLEY was under the impression there were more. At any rate, it would not be denied that there was a feeling at the time that it was an official Committee, and that before it the employees did not get quite the sort of hearing they had anticipated and had a right to expect. The hon. Member for South-West Manchester had deprecated the making of appeals at the present juncture involving expenditure from public funds. But it was not the responsibility of those who had raised this question to point out where the money should come from. Before the Budget was disposed of they would have a great deal to say as to where the money had gone, and they would then make suggestions as to how money might be raised in other directions than those proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Then he desired to refer to a matter affecting his own constituency. Devonport and Plymouth were practically one

town, but the postal staff at Devonport received quite a different scale of pay from that in force at Plymouth. Prior to 1897 the Plymouth employees were divided into two classes, one class having a maximum of 52s. and the other 40s. Under the Tweedmouth Report the two classes were amalgamated, and now the whole of the indoor staff had the prospect of advancing to 52s. In Devonport they formerly had a maximum of 40s., that had been extended to 44s., and there the matter at present stood. Devonport was one of the most highly rented towns in the Kingdom. When he raised the question on a previous occasion the then Financial Secretary accounted for the differentiation between the different staffs by saying the scales were based on the amount and importance of the business at the respective offices. He did not see why such a principle should apply to a case such as he was describing. According to the result of his inquiries, when the various places were scheduled the question of rental was taken into consideration in settling the schedule in which a particular town should be placed. No doubt Plymouth was a very important place, but so also was Devonport. Devonport was a great naval arsenal and a large military depot, and the postal work in connection with the Services was extremely important The population, which now stood at 80,000, was growing at an extremely rapid rate, owing to the fact that the Admiralty were spending a stupendous sum of money on the development of their works. Naturally the contractor had imported into the town a great army of labour, and that tended in the direction of raising rents. If the Financial Secretary would make inquiry he would be satisfied that the rental conditions prevailing in Devonport were such that the difference in the rates of pay in the offices he had named should no longer be maintained. It was impossible to compare a town like Exeter with Devonport. Two or three years ago there was a differentiation of treatment between the postmen in the two towns he had alluded to. They petitioned that the treatment should be made uniform, and an inquiry was made, but the result was unsatisfactory. He maintained that, at the present moment, there was justification with regard to the postal employees for a further Committee of Inquiry. He did not think that his hon. friend was right in saying that there was only one official upon the Tweedmouth Committee. He had a sort of recollection that the constitution of that committee was extremely official, and after consulting the list of names he was convinced that it was more official than he thought it was. He had only one word more to say with regard to the postmen in the three towns he had mentioned. If the pay was to be made uniform and rise to the maximum it might be accepted. For the same reasons that the Devonport employees of the Post Office were asking for a reconsideration of their pay, he asked, on behalf of the postmen for an inquiry at the same time into the question as to whether the maximum ought not to be raised to 28s. per week.

He thought he had some justification in making this request, because he had already shown in his comparison that some towns had now a maximum of 28s. per week. The population of the three towns he had given as an illustration amounted to about 200,000 people, but the population of towns like Brighton, Derby, Hull, Leicester, Nottingham, and Wolverhampton was as great as the population of the three towns to which he had referred. Hon. Gentlemen would perhaps bear in mind that the population of those three towns in itself justified the postmen there being treated on the same basis as many of those other towns where the population was not so great. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to have an inquiry into the conditions now prevailing in those three towns, and if he found, as he hoped he would, that the rental conditions were the same throughout, he thought the hon. Member would see at once that it was manifestly unfair to pay one section one rate of wage, and another section a totally different rate. He knew two postal employees, one working in Devonport, and the other in Liverpool, and one of them had the prospect of going up to a maximum wage of 52s. per week, while the other could only rise to 44s. per week. He would now leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Secretary to the Treasury, and in conclusion he would

appeal to him to give an undertaking that he would have an inquiry held into the whole matter. (8.24.)

*(8.47.) MR. DUKE (Plymouth) said on both sides of the House hon. Members had protested against political influence being placed at the disposal of the Postmens' Federation for the purpose of obtaining for postal servants an improvement in their conditions of service. It appeared to him that there was a perfectly constitutional and proper objection to this use being made of the House of Commons. But on the other hand most people knew that the recognised practice—recognised by the Post Office and the Treasury and the country at large—at the present time was that the postal servants should communicate with their representatives in Parliament. He could not see of what use it was to communicate with their representatives in Parliament, unless those representatives were to make their grievances known either by letter or in the House itself. With regard to the grievance which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Devonport, he did not intend to discuss it because the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote had promised to investigate it, all he wished to say, was that the matter had already been investigated, and although the case made out by the Post Office Officials was in its facts unanswerable all it had met with was a polite denial. That was an excellent instance of the unsatisfactory character of the present mode of dealing with this question. He did not propose to discuss generally the terms of service and the wages of an individual case, he desired to mention two matters relating to the Postal Department and the postmen. They were matters which he considered of public importance, and matters essentially of a kind entitled to be mentioned in the Committee. One was the present relations between the Postmens' Federation and the Postal Department. The Federation was formed with the consent of the Department as a regular means of communication between the postman and the Postal Department. Some intermediary was required. He did not think anybody in this country believed that the postmen were generously treated. At least if there were such he had never met them, but if the Secretary to the Treasury thought that the postmen were generously treated he hoped the hon. Gentleman would say so.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I certainly do.

*MR. DUKE: I can only say with equal emphasis I certainly do not. The hon. Member continuing said that the Federation was organised on the understanding that it should not become a trade union with a body of paid officials. It was managed by postmen who devoted their own time, and who provided substitutes at their own expense, to attend to their postal duties while they attended any meetings of the Federation. He did not know why the Department, which had recognised that it was a useful institution, and had encouraged its formation by the postmen, were now complaining. The postal authorities now were cutting down the leave of these men, and putting restrictions upon them in the matter of leave required for the purpose of administering the business of their Federation. If that restrictive policy was carried much further this Federation could not be carried on on its present lines. It might or might not be desirable that the Federation should be carried on, but in his opinion it certainly was desirable, and he thought facilities should be given to those men so far as was consistent with subordination, and without neglect of their duty, to carry it on. Nobody wanted to encourage postmen to strike, but it seemed to him that the best mode to discourage them from so doing was to encourage them in carrying on a lawful organisation. Perhaps the Secretary of the Treasury would explain to the Committee what were the facts? As he understood the matter the postmen were told that too much leave had been taken, which, no doubt, had been taken at the postmen's own expense, and told that the Department would not permit unlimited leave. That was, of course, quite reasonable. The postmen proposed a certain number of days should be given, and that seemed to have been conformed to for one year, but further restrictions had now been put upon the leave. He did not for a

moment suggest that the Department might not be right in the matter, but the postmen did not think that it was right or that it was treating them in a kindly way. The postmen thought the Department was putting undue pressure upon them. He did not believe that was the wish of the Postmaster General, and he was quite certain it was not the wish of the Secretary of the Treasury, but it was very desirable that the postmen should understand the lines upon which the Federation could be allowed to run. It was quite clear that they could not have unlimited leave, but on the other hand if they were not generously treated when they desired leave for the conduct of the business of the Federation, which should be conducted as a domestic matter in the Post Office itself, it might have to be conducted as an ordinary trades union. That would not be at all beneficial to the Post Office Service, which must be a disciplined, subordinate, and permanent Government Department managed without friction. It might result in action such as was taken by free workmen outside the public service. Another matter which he desired to refer to was the position of the postmen in regard to a system which had been introduced comparitively recently of what was called rotation of duty. Under the Tweedmouth Committee the postmen were divided into two staffs,—an indoor staff who stayed at the Post Office, and an outdoor staff who delivered letters. It was thought advantageous to the public service to have one separate set of men employed to deliver letters because they got accustomed to the district in which those letters were delivered. But a system was being tried in the large towns whereby postmen who had delivered letters all their lives were being put to perform indoor duty, letter sorting, and the like, and indoor men were being required to undertake outdoor work. Postmen strongly objected to this. These were all matters connected with the administration of the Department, and he hoped his hon. friend would go into these matters, for he was perfectly sure that so far as he was concerned the hon. Gentleman was not out of sympathy with the humbler ranks of the service.

*(9.4.) MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) said he joined in the request that the Government should grant an independent Committee. He thought it was the duty of the House to press upon the Government the claims the workers persisted in making, and he did so for the reason that these officials were at present so much dissatisfied that they were positively considering whether they ought not to send a representative to this House who should speak on their behalf, because it was felt that members who represented the people generally, failed to represent the grievances which they urged and thought should be granted. The hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that afternoon objected to the introduction of the term "Labour Member," and said he refused to recognise any man as a Labour Member. It certainly ought not to be necessary for any particular body of men to be compelled to select and maintain in this House one of their own class, in order that their claims should get a respectful and considerate hearing. If that hearing was not already given they failed to fulfil their duties as representatives of the people, the great bulk of whom in this country were what was called the working classes, and for that reason he joined in asking that this Committee should be appointed. The results of the Committee presided over by Lord Tweedmouth had failed to satisfy the employees. There was not only the question of pay to be considered, but there were other matters which these servants of a great public Department desired to have investigated. The hon. Member for Devonport drew attention to one local aspect of the rule in which the scale of pay, according to the report, was divided into five classes. He thought that the pay should be regulated according to the average rate of wages, and the cost of living in each district. Great complaint had been made about the arrangement known as "split duty," dividing the sorter's day into two parts. They had to work from, say 4 a.m. to 7.30, and then return at 4 p.m. to 8. In large towns men lived at a distance, thus considerable time was occupied in journeys, and also for meals; thus many men could not get more than five hours' sleep at once, which was not conducive to health or comfort. The Commission urged the abolition of "split duty," and recommended nine hour off

duty clear of travelling. Then again there was the position of the women clerks to be considered. They used to begin at £65 a year, and rise to the maximum of £100 a year by annual increments of £3. Now they begin at £55 a year, rising to a maximum of £70, by annual increments of £2 10s. He thought above all that an opportunity should be given to the servants of the Postal Department to have access to the principals of the Department. At the present time there was a great difficulty in obtaining leave so that the representatives of the men might go to represent the case of the men to the principals of the Departments. It was also complained that it was very difficult to obtain sick leave; and, further, in the matter of sanitary arrangements and ventilation much remained to be done to protect the health of the officials. So on all those grounds he supported the claim of these officials, that there should be an independent Inquiry into these questions. He thought the Committee ought to deal generously with them, and that careful consideration should be given to their claims, and full justice done.

MR. DAVID MORGAN (Essex, Walthamstow) said he thought this Inquiry would be very desirable. The Department employed a large number of men, and they ought to be fairly and properly treated. With regard to the wages, he felt that they were inadequate when they came to consider the fact that on account of his duties it was absolutely necessary for a postman to live near his work, and therefore could not go out of his district into another, where housing accommodation might be cheaper. The sanitary arrangements in many Post Offices left much to be desired. One Post Office with which he was acquainted in his own constituency might have been sufficient when the population was 50,000, but now it was 108,000 the work had naturally increased enormously, and the Post Office facilities were nothing like what was required. Would the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Treasury say whether there was any rule by which Post Office officials were promoted from the third to the second class, because from information which he had received he believed there were many men now in the third class who from the amount of work they did should be in the second class. He hoped the hon. Member would consider the arguments which had been used in favour of this large body of hard-worked public servants, and that if his Department could see their way they would listen to and consent to the demand for the Inquiry which had been asked for. He believed that if that Inquiry were held it would do a great deal of good, because there were no doubt a great many questions on which the complaints of these men were well grounded, and it was only right that they should be considered.

*MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said it was no doubt very unpopular at the present time to suggest anything that might entail further expenditure, but those who sat with him on the Opposition Benches were not responsible for that extravagence which had been going on in the way of expenditure for the past few years. At the present time the amount of money provided by the Fawcett scheme for rural postmen who had to travel long distances was absolutely inadequate, and he certainly thought some further considerations should be given to those men. All sorts of restrictions were imposed upon them; many of them had to walk many miles a day to meet the mail or the postcart driven from the neighbouring town, and they had to deliver their mails to that cart and take the mails from it, and in times of storm and bad weather the mail carts were frequently unable to keep their time. He knew many instances where, owing to snowstorms or the bad condition of the roads, through stress of weather, the carts were late, and these unfortunate men had to wait for them often for hours without shelter of any kind. He thought that men should not be exposed to such risks unnecessarily, nor be expected to stand out in the snow and rain without any shelter. He had called the attention of the hon. Gentleman to this subject by letter, but had never yet received a satisfactory reply. He had been told once that these men were allowed overcoats, but he thought better protection should be afforded and adequate shelters provided.

*(9.17.) MR. HAY said in his opinion the heavy increase of the national expenditure was not a proper ground for refusing to remedy the grievances of the servants of the State if those grievances were well founded. That the country was engaged in a special work was not a reason why the State's servants should not receive that which would be given to them by a private employer. Furthermore, the State should be a bright example to the private employer, and therefore to put forward that argument was to deny the first attribute that should attach to State employment, which was that men should have adequate remuneration for good service. But even during the course of this war there had been instances where the Government had departed from that principle. It was not two months since the Secretary of State for War proposed to increase the pay of the Army, and it was only two years ago since the Secretary of State for Home Affairs proposed to increase the pay of the police in consequence of the changed condition of life in our towns. The servants of the State employed in other directions were therefore given an increase to cover the enhanced rent in the districts in which they lived, and he thought it was only right that these servants of the State should be similarly treated. But he did not limit his demand to that. He felt that the sanitary conditions, or rather the insanitary conditions, of some of our postal establishments and other matters not financial made an independent inquiry absolutely necessary.

To hark back to the Tweedmouth Committee as the beginning and end of all inquiry into the conditions of life of this great army of postal employees was absolutely ridiculous. Not only had the circumstances altered, but the number of men had largely increased. It had been shown that that Committee was a more or less packed bench; the bulk of its members were gentlemen who must be regarded as being more or less dependent persons. They were permanent officials, and therefore could not be said to enjoy that freedom of thought, action, and opinion which attached to men not connected with the Civil Service. He entirely demurred to the suggestion that this was an unjustifiable agitation, by which undue pressure had been brought to bear on Members of the House. Even if it were so, he could not follow the hon. Member for King's Lynn in saying that at this time of day employees of the State should be divested of their civic rights.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that his contention was that if this sort of thing went on it would have to be considered.

*MR. HAY thought the obvious conclusion to be drawn from that statement was that if this sort of thing continued—to use the hon. Member's words—the pressure would become so great and be so effective as to destroy the independence of Members of the House of Commons, and that consequently persons who received pay from the State would have to be divested of their electoral rights. If the Post Office were only administered by business men, nothing would be heard of these troubles which annually took up so much of the time of the House. In the present Postmaster General they had a man whom theyknew to be most considerate of the feelings of others, and a man of strong character and great determination. Nevertheless, since he had been at the Post Office he seemed to have lost those traits of character. The truth was that the real masters of the Post Office were the permanent officials, who had had no experience in the management of men, and had no sympathy with the aspirations and ideals of the working and middle classes who constituted the postal staff. So long as the Post Office remained the mere serf of the Treasury, surrendering its balances year by year to that Department, so long would there be this discontent, not only on the part of the persons employed but also on the part of the public, who in many cases were most inefficiently served. The Government would be well advised in believing that the action of those who had taken this matter up was dictated, not by any electioneering considerations, but by a sense of public duty and fair play. They believed that the time had arrived when these grievances, whether ill or well founded, should receive a careful, sympathetic, and business-like examination at the hands of an independent Committee.

Having dealt with the general question, he desired to refer to two or three points affecting interests with which he was specially connected. The first was the case of postal servants engaged in military work in South Africa.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN did not wish to interrupt any discussion germane to the Vote, but the men to whom the hon. Member was now referring were serving as soldiers in South Africa. The conditions of their service were matters for the War Office, and with which the Postmaster General had nothing to do. He therefore submitted that it would not be in order to discuss the question on the present Vote.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If that is the case, it will be out of order to discuss their salaries on this Vote.

*MR. HAY said he had not mentioned the word "salary." He was about to say that these men had been lent, for the service of the State, by one Department to another, and he submitted that he would be in order in referring to them, because one of the inducements offered to them to serve their country in South Africa was that they should not be in a worse position than that offered by private employers, viz.: that their situations should be kept open for them, and that whilst they were absent they should receive their pay. The Financial Secretary had stated that he would have an opportunity to refer to the question on the Estimates, and he desired now to take advantage of that opportunity. The point he wished to make was that the Post Office sometimes posed as a private employer, and at other times as a Department of the State, according to which attitude suited their book. It was not right that these men should be made the subjects of a game of battledore and shuttlecock between two Departments, the one saying they had nothing to do with the men because they were under the War Office, and the other declining all responsibility on the ground that the Post Office had to do with the terms under which they served.

Another point of detail to which he wished to refer was almost personal. During the last few months it had been his duty to communicate on several occasions with the Postmaster General, and his experience had been that if he made a general statement he was asked for details, and if he gave details he received a general statement in reply. The principle of the Post Office for years past had nominally been to discourage the increase of the auxiliary or unestablished staff. So late as December 31st last the Postmaster General described the auxiliary employment as very undesirable. Nevertheless, on February 6th last, there was an increase of ninety-three persons on the auxiliary staff at the East Central branch. He contended that if principles were laid down for the administration of a leviathan Department such as the Post Office, those principles ought not to be forthwith departed from without grave reason being shown. It seemed that when it suited the feelings and the exigencies of the utterly unbusinesslike authorities at the Post Office, all principle went to the winds, and by technical points and *finesse* in regard to regulations the men were harassed and irritated and subjected to injustices which would not be tolerated by the staff of any large concern such as a railway, or Whiteley's, or any similar establishments. On one occasion last winter the Dutch mail was late, and a certain portion of the men in the City were called upon during their period of rest to deliver this late mail. As a result they had nothing to eat from early morning until between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, and they had to resume duty between six and eight o'clock for the evening delivery. According to the regulations made under the Tweedmouth Committee, the time allowed for tea was half an hour. These men having been without sustenance for the best part of the day, took an half hour, to which they were entitled under the rules, but they were all, nevertheless, entered on the book as "late," and they appealed against it successfully, and when he complained to the Postmaster General he was told not to trouble about the matter as the appeal had been allowed. He instanced this as an example of the muddling and unbusinesslike way in which these matters were treated. He

*(9.17.) MR. HAY said in his opinion the heavy increase of the national expenditure was not a proper ground for refusing to remedy the grievances of the servants of the State if those grievances were well founded. That the country was engaged in a special work was not a reason why the State's servants should not receive that which would be given to them by a private employer. Furthermore, the State should be a bright example to the private employer, and therefore to put forward that argument was to deny the first attribute that should attach to State employment, which was that men should have adequate remuneration for good service. But even during the course of this war there had been instances where the Government had departed from that principle. It was not two months since the Secretary of State for War proposed to increase the pay of the Army, and it was only two years ago since the Secretary of State for Home Affairs proposed to increase the pay of the police in consequence of the changed condition of life in our towns. The servants of the State employed in other directions were therefore given an increase to cover the enhanced rent in the districts in which they lived, and he thought it was only right that these servants of the State should be similarly treated. But he did not limit his demand to that. He felt that the sanitary conditions, or rather the insanitary conditions, of some of our postal establishments and other matters not financial made an independent inquiry absolutely necessary.

To hark back to the Tweedmouth Committee as the beginning and end of all inquiry into the conditions of life of this great army of postal employees was absolutely ridiculous. Not only had the circumstances altered, but the number of men had largely increased. It had been shown that that Committee was a more or less packed bench; the bulk of its members were gentlemen who must be regarded as being more or less dependent persons. They were permanent officials, and therefore could not be said to enjoy that freedom of thought, action, and opinion which attached to men not connected with the Civil Service. He entirely demurred to the suggestion that this was an unjustifiable agitation, by which undue pressure had been brought to bear on Members of the House. Even if it were so, he could not follow the hon. Member for King's Lynn in saying that at this time of day employees of the State should be divested of their civic rights.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that his contention was that if this sort of thing went on it would have to be considered.

*MR. HAY thought the obvious conclusion to be drawn from that statement was that if this sort of thing continued—to use the hon. Member's words—the pressure would become so great and be so effective as to destroy the independence of Members of the House of Commons, and that consequently persons who received pay from the State would have to be divested of their electoral rights. If the Post Office were only administered by business men, nothing would be heard of these troubles which annually took up so much of the time of the House. In the present Postmaster General they had a man whom theyknew to be most considerate of the feelings of others, and a man of strong character and great determination. Nevertheless, since he had been at the Post Office he seemed to have lost those traits of character. The truth was that the real masters of the Post Office were the permanent officials, who had had no experience in the management of men, and had no sympathy with the aspirations and ideals of the working and middle classes who constituted the postal staff. So long as the Post Office remained the mere serf of the Treasury, surrendering its balances year by year to that Department, so long would there be this discontent, not only on the part of the persons employed but also on the part of the public, who in many cases were most inefficiently served. The Government would be well advised in believing that the action of those who had taken this matter up was dictated, not by any electioneering considerations, but by a sense of public duty and fair play. They believed that the time had arrived when these grievances, whether ill or well founded, should receive a careful, sympathetic, and business-like examination at the hands of an independent Committee.

Having dealt with the general question, he desired to refer to two or three points affecting interests with which he was specially connected. The first was the case of postal servants engaged in military work in South Africa.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN did not wish to interrupt any discussion germane to the Vote, but the men to whom the hon. Member was now referring were serving as soldiers in South Africa. The conditions of their service were matters for the War Office, and with which the Postmaster General had nothing to do. He therefore submitted that it would not be in order to discuss the question on the present Vote.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If that is the case, it will be out of order to discuss their salaries on this Vote.

*MR. HAY said he had not mentioned the word "salary." He was about to say that these men had been lent, for the service of the State, by one Department to another, and he submitted that he would be in order in referring to them, because one of the inducements offered to them to serve their country in South Africa was that they should not be in a worse position than that offered by private employers, viz.: that their situations should be kept open for them, and that whilst they were absent they should receive their pay. The Financial Secretary had stated that he would have an opportunity to refer to the question on the Estimates, and he desired now to take advantage of that opportunity. The point he wished to make was that the Post Office sometimes posed as a private employer, and at other times as a Department of the State, according to which attitude suited their book. It was not right that these men should be made the subjects of a game of battledore and shuttlecock between two Departments, the one saying they had nothing to do with the men because they were under the War Office, and the other declining all responsibility on the ground that the Post Office had to do with the terms under which they served.

Another point of detail to which he wished to refer was almost personal. During the last few months it had been his duty to communicate on several occasions with the Postmaster General, and his experience had been that if he made a general statement he was asked for details, and if he gave details he received a general statement in reply. The principle of the Post Office for years past had nominally been to discourage the increase of the auxiliary or unestablished staff. So late as December 31st last the Postmaster General described the auxiliary employment as very undesirable. Nevertheless, on February 6th last, there was an increase of ninety-three persons on the auxiliary staff at the East Central branch. He contended that if principles were laid down for the administration of a leviathan Department such as the Post Office, those principles ought not to be forthwith departed from without grave reason being shown. It seemed that when it suited the feelings and the exigencies of the utterly unbusinesslike authorities at the Post Office, all principle went to the winds, and by technical points and *finesse* in regard to regulations the men were harassed and irritated and subjected to injustices which would not be tolerated by the staff of any large concern such as a railway, or Whiteley's, or any similar establishments. On one occasion last winter the Dutch mail was late, and a certain portion of the men in the City were called upon during their period of rest to deliver this late mail. As a result they had nothing to eat from early morning until between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, and they had to resume duty between six and eight o'clock for the evening delivery. According to the regulations made under the Tweedmouth Committee, the time allowed for tea was half an hour. These men having been without sustenance for the best part of the day, took an half hour, to which they were entitled under the rules, but they were all, nevertheless, entered on the book as "late," and they appealed against it successfully, and when he complained to the Postmaster General he was told not to trouble about the matter as the appeal had been allowed. He instanced this as an example of the muddling and unbusinesslike way in which these matters were treated. He

thought that any business of the state conducted on lines such as these was not only unbusinesslike but deserved the condemnation of the Committee. The regulations of the Post Office, under which the auxiliary staff were governed, were also muddled, unbusinesslike, and bullying in their character. If something like 160,000 persons were performing their daily work under such conditions it was high time that some absolutely independent inquiry should be made on the part of the House of Commons, and they ought not to be put off by the official phraseology of his hon. friend the Secretary of the Treasury, who he asked to signalise his tenure of office by bringing about the investigation so much desired.

(9.38.). MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said his hon. friend opposite who had just sat down, had made an excellent speech, and he had represented the Post Office Department as serf to the Treasury. It was in regard to the serfdom of the Post Office to the Treasury that he intended to speak. It was a fact that only one Amendment could be taken, and that was put in the form of a reduction of the Postmaster-General's salary. His hon. friend below him had been much more considerate than himself, for he had intended moving the reduction of the Postmaster General's salary by £500, and although he was entitled to preference he had suppressed himself and had given away to the Amendment of his hon. friend. In the past his voice had been like one crying in the wilderness. He had no personal animosity against Lord Londonderry, but having regard to the fact that the Post Office was a business which affected every branch of the community, he claimed that they ought to have the Postmaster General sitting in the people's House. For more than a generation the Postmaster General had been a Member of the House of Commons where he had sat to defend his policy.

It so happened that in the year 1866 an Act was passed through both Houses making it possible that the Postmaster General should be capable of sitting in the House of Commons. So great were the objections to the Postmaster General sitting in the House of Lords, that the Bill to which he had alluded was deemed to be absolutely necessary. It was an utter abrogation of the whole spirit of constitutional liberty that an official who had such an enormous amount of money passing through his hands, and who had under his charge 160,000 employees—it was an outrage that such an official should have no direct representative in the House of Commons. The Postmasters General in former years had done great service to the country in consequence of having a seat in the House of Commons. He might mention Sir Lyon Playfair and Mr. Fawcett, who introduced magnificent reforms mainly because they were subjected to the influence of the House of Commons. From the year 1892 to 1895 there was no more satisfactory official than Mr. Arnold Morley. If the Postmaster General could not himself sit in the House of Commons he ought at least to be directly represented. The Secretary to the Treasury claimed that he represented the Postmaster General, but he did not represent directly and could not control the officials who supplied him with his information. It was absolutely ridiculous that questions addressed by them should be answered by a Gentleman in the House of Lords, who would only give such information as was supplied to him by his officials. It would be better to have no Postmaster General at all than to be placed in such a position.

It was no exaggeration to say that the Duke of Norfolk personally paid a great deal of attention to his work, and he was very courteous indeed to hon. Members of the House of Commons in supplying them with the information they required. He, however, was an exception, and they had now got a Postmaster General who was a politician first and a Postmaster General after. The present Postmaster General was a gentleman who would not attend to his business, although he had 160,000 men and all their destinies in his hands. When the Postmaster General was not in his office he was generally Primrosing all over the place. He wished to have a gentleman like the Duke of Norfolk as Postmaster General, who would attend to his business and be subject to the control of public opinion. He had no

hesitation in saying a good word even for a lord, because it was his misfortune that the Duke of Norfolk was a duke.

Every single Department of the State was directly represented in the House of Commons except the Post Office. Some of the Departments had more than one representative in the House. Why was the Postmaster General not in the House of Commons? Was it because he was afraid of being asked so many questions? In the case of a Department like the Post Office it was absolutely necessary that hon. Members should come in actual contact with the Minister for that Deparment. He admitted that it was a very great honour to be replied to by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. The system was that the Question was put to the hon. Member and it was referred to various officials, and some considerable time after they generally received a letter from the Postmaster General saying that nothing could be done. No doubt the Postmaster General was better employed arranging the laws for the landlords in Ireland. With regard to what had been said by the Secretary to the Treasury it was an utter mistake that the Post Office should be regarded as a profit-making concern. The Post Office was established for the benefit of the people, and upon one occasion Mr. Shaw Lefevre actually proposed that £3,000,000 out of the Post Office revenue should be devoted to the reduction of postal charges. He considered it was an outrage that the Postmaster General should not have a seat in the House of Commons.

*(9.54.) MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) understood that the question was that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into certain grievances of the postal employees, but the hon. Member for South Donegal seemed to have devoted his time not so much to advancing arguments for the appointment of a Committee as to——

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The Question before the Committee is to reduce Item A—the Vote to the Postmaster General—by £100.

*MR. BANBURY said that had been moved in order to urge that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into certain grievances, but the hon. Member for South Donegal seemed to use the Motion that the Postmaster General's salary should be reduced merely as a foundation to attack the Postmaster General. He attacked the Postmaster General because he was a Member of the House of Lords and not of the House of Commons, but in the same breath he said that the Duke of Norfolk was a model Postmaster General. The Duke of Norfolk was a Member of the House of Lords, and if he was a model Postmaster Lord Londonderry was not disqualified from being a model Postmaster because he was a Member of the House of Lords. He rose not so much with the object of answering the speech of the hon. Member for South Donegal as to point out to the House, as he had already done on other occasions, the great detriment which he conceived would result to the country if they were continually, for electioneering purposes—because it was for no other purpose—to have Motions brought before them for Committees of Inquiry which should be Committees of that House, and which were asked for merely because it was supposed that pressure could be put on the Members of the Committee to induce them, whether right or wrong, to grant the demands which had been asked by the people who pressed for inquiry. The hon. Member for South Donegal said the Post Office must not be considered as a revenue Department, and that it was to be managed in the interest of the bulk of the people. He quite agreed with the hon. Member. That was absolutely true, but he would point out to him that if the Post Office was conducted at a loss somebody would have to find that loss, and the people who would have to find it would be the bulk of the people, and it was because he objected to the bulk of the people being mulcted merely for electioneering purposes that he supported the Government tonight in the course they were going to pursue. He believed that every Member of the House of Commons was anxious that every servant of the State should receive a proper consideration for his labour

and he was sure that every one on the Conservative side of the House would agree with him when he said that that was the generally accepted opinion in all quarters of the House. But how were they to arrive at what was a proper sum to pay a man for his labour? They could only arrive at it by finding out whether there were many applicants or not for the position, and as long as they knew that there were hundreds of people who were ready and anxious to take up the position, then he thought the Committee should consider the bulk of the people who found the money, and not merely a few discontented people who thought that by exerting a little pressure on weak-kneed Members of Parliament they could secure something for themselves at the expense of people who were not better off and who in some cases were worse off than themselves. This Post Office agitation had been going on ever since he had the honour of becoming a Member of Parliament ten years ago. When he first entered the House a Committee was appointed, presided over by Lord Tweedmouth, for the purpose of investigating these grievances. He did not think anybody could say that was a prejudiced Committee, or that it was prejudiced against the working classes.

AN HON. MEMBER suggested that it might be prejudiced in their favour.

* MR. BANBURY said his hon. friend observed that if it was prejudiced and it would be in the other direction. He believed that his hon. friend, with his usual acuteness, was right. That Committee reported that certain increases should be made, and those increases were were made—[AN HON. MEMBER: No!]—and the people who asked for that Committee were not satisfied and wanted more. Another Committee was appointed, and it was presided over by the Duke of Norfolk. His right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture was present during the sittings of the Committee, or he was a member of it. The result of that Committee was that further increases were made, but still the Post Office employees were not satisfied. He was afraid that they were like hon. Gentlemen on the other side, who, whatever concessions they got under the Irish Land Acts, still demanded more. He believed that whatever concessions were made. and however they were increased, they would still be required to give more. What they had to arrive at was what was just and fair, and the worst tribunal to arrive at that was a Committee of the House of Commons. How did they appoint a Committee of the House of Commons on a subject like this? They took those Members—[Cries of "Divide."] He was extremely sorry that his remarks were so true that hon. Members opposite did not care to listen to them. They appointed certain Members in favour of the propo ed inquiry and certain Members against. Was that an impartial inquiry? What they ought to have, if they were to have a Committee, was a Committee consisting of Members who were not prejudiced for or against. He did not say that he ought to be on the Committee—far from it. [Cries of "Divide" and "Order."] He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman who called "Divide" thought he would make him sit down, but if he did he was quite mistaken. He had no wish to prolong the debate He had said what he had said because he believed it to be his duty to say so. Nobody could say that he had got up and taken the popular side. It was not always the popular side that was right. He thought he was justified in making the few remarks he had made. He had not made them for electioneering purposes, but because he believed it was in the interest of the country that civil servants should not continue to put pressure on Members in order to advantage their own position. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?] Their votes were given to them to be exercised for the benefit of the country. He remembered the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire some years ago, in a very remarkable speech, saying, in much better language than he could command, every thing he had said to-night. [Laughter.] He did not know why hon. Members opposite should laugh at the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was one of their leaders. However that might be, he thought the

House of Commons should pause before they yielded to pressure for merely electioneering purposes.

(10.6.) MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said the hon. Member for the Peckham Division was entirely mistaken in imagining that the Members who had taken part in the debate had done so for electioneering purposes. If he had taken the trouble to analyse the numbers, he would have found that there were 160,000 voters spread all over the three Kingdoms, and it was doubtful whether in any constituency the number of men engaged in Post Office work could influence an election. The hon. Member for Peckham told them that this agitation had been going on during the ten years he had been in the House. What was the reason that it was not stopped? It was because these men had genuine grievances. He had attended meetings both in London and Dublin, and he held the most dangerous thing that could happen was that a public Department should be seething with discontent. These men were helping to carry on the public business of the country, and he put it to the Financial Secretary of the Treasury that the safest thing that could be done under the circumstances was to hold an Inquiry. If these men could not prove their case, it would drop to the ground. What were the facts? There was a journal edited by Post Office officials, and he found that the Post Office servants were clamouring all over the country for some constituency where they could put in a man to represent their opinions to this Assembly. That was to say, they were of opinion there was no one in the House who had a desire to do justice to a large body of men who were engaged in the service of the State. There was one other argument which he thought was worthy of consideration at this stage of the proceedings. We ought to have a body of contented men conducting this important service; for after all the duties performed by the postal and telegraphic servants were amongst the most important that could be committed to any section of the community. Therefore it was absolutely necessary in the public interest that these men should be satisfied. He could not understand why there should be on the part of some Members of the House of Commons or the Treasury any desire to prevent an Inquiry into their grievances. He entirely agreed with his hon. friend the Member for South Donegal that it was necessary that the Postmaster General should be a Member of this House, because the official in charge of such an important Department should be in touch with the representatives of the people. He would go further, and say that of all the Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite, the Financial Secretary of the Treasury —without impugning the action of the hon. Gentleman, whom he had found most courteous in any correspondence he had had with him in this matter— should not represent the Post Office, for he had too much to do. He had enough to do as Secretary of the Treasury, without being bothered with Post Office matters. His duties in connection with the Treasury and as the representative of the Post Office were of that dual nature which disabled him from taking the same impartial view of Post Office matters which would be taken by an independent official. He did not wish to detain the House at this late hour by going into many points which he could bring forward with reference to sanitation, promotion, and the regulations of the service. He could dilate on those matters for a long time if necessary, but he did not think any useful purpose would be served by going into the details. He put it to the Financial Secretary of the Treasury that it was desirable in the public interest that such an inquiry should be held by an independent Commission, because all who had taken any interest in this question knew that the recommendations which were made by Lord Tweedmouth's Commission had not been carried out, and that therefore there was discontent among the servants of the Post Office. He expressed the hope that the Financial Secretary of the Treasury would give a favourable reply on the point which had been brought before him, and that an Inquiry would be granted to be held by a Select Committee of this House, and not by permanent officials. They should have an independent Committee to try the questions at issue. It was nothing short of a farce to appoint

permanent officials to inquire into their own conduct in the past, and to say how things were to be carried out in the future.

(10.14.) MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This debate has travelled over a very wide field. It started with the single object of securing an Inquiry by a Committee of this House into the grievances of Post Office servants, which is very much the same question as was raised earlier in the evening on the previous Vote. At the same time, although I have expressed my opinion on that proposal, I think it is due to the Committee that I should deal with the points which have been raised in this debate. I scarcely know what to admire more, the happy optimism of the hon. Member for the St Patrick Division of Dublin, who believes that, although all inquiries have hitherto failed to produce satisfaction, one more would be certain to result in allaying what he calls the seething discontent of the service, or the profound distrust which my hon. friend the Member for Hoxton shows in all who have not the happiness to be entirely independent of the Government service. The hon. Gentleman who initiated this debate declared that what the servants of the Post Office required was a Court of Appeal, before which they could bring their grievances, such as anyone outside the Government service had. He then went on to urge on the Government that they would do well to put off the responsibility which at presents rests on their shoulders, and lay it on the House of Commons. I cannot imagine a greater dereliction of duty on the part of responsible Ministers than to follow the advice of the hon. Member. I refuse to resign one particle of my responsibility, or to accept the suggestion of the hon. Member that the Government should wash their hands of their responsibility, and throw this subject, as an open question, before the House of Commons, and ask a Committee of this House, without aid or guidance from responsible Ministers, to judge upon the multitude of conflicting interests and details incident to the administration of so great service as the Post Office, I, for one, will not be a party to putting off that responsibility on to the House of Commons.

The hon. Gentleman says that what the Post Office employees require is a Court of Appeal. I venture to say that they have a Court of Appeal such as exists for no other body of workers in the country. They have free access and right of appeal to their immediate superiors, who are permanent servants of the Post Office, like themselves. They can have their cases considered by them, and if they are not satisfied with the result they can appeal to the Permanent Secretary of the Post Office and to the Postmaster General himself. The attitude of the hon. Member in this matter is surely extremely inconsistent. He complains in one breath that the Postmaster General and the Permanent Secretary come periodically fresh to the Post Office with no experience of its business, having spent their previous lives in other occupations, and in the next breath he says that these same gentlemen are bound up with tradition, and that they are anxious only to maintain the existing state of things. I venture to say that there is not a more able public servant than the present Permanent Secretary of the Post Office. Since I have held my present office I have been brought, I had almost said into daily, certainly, into almost daily relations with him. I have had to discuss extremely difficult and complicated subjects with him, and I venture to say that a clearer mind and a fairer and more impartial man no one could wish to find among Government servants, and we may be happy if he is a fair sample of those who preside over great public Departments. I admit that in any great service of this kind there must always be anomalies. There will be cases of individual hardship. New difficulties and new problems will arise, which cannot be foreseen, and which require constant revision and review by the heads of the Department. My hon. friend the Member for South-West Manchester, in a speech which, if he will allow me to say so, I very heartily agree with, said that he believed that some part of the discontent or dissatisfaction which exists among members of the service, and perhaps also among Members of this

House, is due to the delay which, of course, occurs between the time a representation is made and an answer is received. I think that is true. I think there has been, in some cases, fair matter for complaint in that respect, and in conjunction with my noble friend and the Permanent Secretary I have been doing my utmost to expedite replies to all representations made in a proper way, and especially, if hon. Members will allow me to say so, to ensure that hon. Members who communicate directly with the Postmaster General should be answered at the earliest possible moment. [Cheers.] I am grateful to the Committee for recognising my services.

But having said so much, let me say one thing more. I would beg the House to remember what is the class of questions which is habitually brought before the Post Office. I will deal with one or two which have been raised in this debate before I finish. They are questions of principle and general application, about which it should be possible to give replies, if not on the spot, at any rate with very brief delay. But there are other questions relating, it may be, to a particular individual in a particular place in perhaps a distant part of the country, and it is not possible to answer off-hand, questions of this kind, if hon. Members desire that full and complete inquiry should be made by the head of the Department. In a great administration like this there must be decentralisation, and how difficult it is to decentralise, either in the Post Office or in the Army, when working under constant examination by question and answer in this House, no hon. Member who has not had experience of official life can easily realise. But there must be decentralisation, because every little petty matter cannot be dealt with by the Postmaster General or the Permanent Secretary. Their attention should be reserved in the main for large questions, and I think it is deplorable, absolutely deplorable, that so much of their time should be occupied, as under present circumstances it necessarily is occupied, with matters of very small detail, because these matters of detail are asked by hon. Members, and because we do not feel that an hon. Member will accept an answer from anyone but the highest authority. I think a third of the time—I am putting it at a low estimate—of the highest officials of the Post Office is occupied in answering queries raised by Members of this House, and in providing me with information in order that I may be in a position to answer the inquiries addressed to me. Under these circumstances, while hon. Members are not content to have a small matter affecting a particular individual in a particular locality dealt with, as it would be in any private business, by the officer on the spot, without appeal or reconsideration unless grievous cause is shown, there must be delay if hon. Members are to inquire from headquarters as to the reasons of that officer's decision and review the whole case. I can assure my hon. friend that it is our desire that the delays should be as short as possible. I think they have been too long in many cases. There have been unfortunate cases where communications from Post Office servants have been altogether overlooked. I think that is most regrettable, and I can assure the Committee that my noble friend and myself are doing everything in our power to prevent their recurrence.

I would ask the Committee to take note of what I am about to tell them. I may say that the correspondence of the Post Office—not the letters it carries for the public, but as to its business—amounts to about 60,000 letters a day, and I would ask hon. Members to remember that fact, and have some patience and forbearance. Occasionally even letters go astray, and then, of course, no answer is received. Now, Sir, let me examine for a moment the class of grievances by which this demand for inquiry has been supported. The first remark I have to make is that no single grievance or alleged grievance has been produced, to the Committee tonight which was not before the Tweedmouth Committee or the President of the Board of Agriculture and the Duke of Norfolk, when they sat in one of the rooms of this House. What we are asked to do is not to inquire into grievances which have not been inquired into before, or which have been overlooked, or have received insufficient attention. What we are asked to do is

to re-try not alone the whole case that was tried by the Tweedmouth Committee, but every particular of that case in which the decision of the Committee did not grant the postmen the whole of what they had asked. It would be futile to expect—as the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, with his happy optimism, suggests—that any fresh inquiry would be successful in allaying this agitation. What is required is that we should go on having the case tried by various tribunals until we have found a tribunal which would find wholly in favour of the complainants. What are these grievances? The hon. Member for Devonport raised a question in relation to the pay of the indoor men at Devonport as compared with the indoor men at Plymouth. He said that the conditions of life in "the three towns," as they are called, were the same, that the cost of house rent and living generally was equal, and that to an ordinary man it was impossible to conceive why different rates of pay should be given to men working in the Post Office at Plymouth and to men working in the Post Office at Devonport. He added that he thought the equality had been admitted, because the outdoor men had been put on an equal footing. The explanation of what, on the face of it, appears to be a grievous anomaly, is that the pay of the indoor men is regulated, not merely by the cost of living, but by the nature and extent of the work they have to do. Now, the letter carrier, when he carries letters for so many hours a day up and down the streets at Devonport or for the same number of hours a day up and down the streets of Plymouth, has a precisely equivalent amount of duty to do, but that is not so in connection with indoor work. The indoor work at Plymouth is infinitely greater than that at Devonport, and being greater, it is also much more complex and more difficult; and accordingly the rate of pay in Plymouth for this more difficult and complicated work is higher than the rate of pay which the men receive for indoor work at Devonport. It is right that both offices should be reviewed to see whether changes have arisen, and I will make that inquiry; but all that I want to show to the Committee is that this thing, which looks at first sight to be a foolish anomaly, is based on good reason.

MR. KEARLEY: I made it clear that there was differentiation until some years ago, and that then the rate of living was the same.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The postmen, discharging exactly the same duties in two towns where the cost of living is the same, get exactly the same rate of pay. Other men who do not discharge the same duties, but other complex and more intricate duties, do not get the same rate of pay. The hon. Member was followed by the hon. Member for Plymouth, who complained that new regulations had been issued which limited the right of postmen to obtain special leave to attend meetings of their association. I think the Committee will admit that the Government is generous in this respect. The established postman has, to begin with, fourteen working days leave, exclusive of Sundays, on full pay; he has, in addition to that, ten days special leave in the course of the year on his providing a substitute so that his work can be carried on efficiently. Now, I submit that twenty-four days leave in a year is not an unreasonable amount of leave to give to these postal servants, and I do not think it can be said that the Postmaster General is unduly hard when he allows these men ten days leave to attend their organisation. But what he found was that some officers were so often absent from their duties as to impede the proper discharge of them, and I can tell the Committee myself of a case where a postman was sent up for pension, on being invalided out of the service on the ground of ill-health due to overwork, in which I have the gravest doubt as to whether that ill-health was not caused, not by his work at the Post Office but by work done outside. I do not think, therefore, that it will be said that we are less generous in this matter than private employers.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): The complaint is that having been originally allowed a greater limit of time they have now been restricted.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If the hon. Member had done me the honour to listen to what I said, he would have heard that that was the complaint to which I gave the answer. We found it necessary to place a restriction on the time outside the fourteen days full leave that postmen might devote to other services.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT: Everybody knows that a member of the Post Office service can take ten days leave if he can find a substitute, but what was alleged, as I understood, was that men who went away on Federation service were formerly given a special allowance, and that that has now been taken away.

MR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I utterly fail to understand what the hon. Gentleman meant by stating what was said by my hon. friend, and what has been re-stated by me. If I have not made myself understood by the hon. Member, I am afraid I am constitutionally unable to do so. Now we come to the complaints of the hon. Member for the Lancaster Division. He complained that the sick leave allowed to the Post Office servants was illiberal.

MR. HELME: What I said was that there was a difficulty in obtaining sick leave.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: A certain amount of control over application for sick leave is necessary in every service. I am afraid that the public service is not free absolutely from what is known as malingering, and uncontrolled sick leave to anyone who applies for it would not, I think, tend to the efficiency of the public service. Let me just tell the Committee what is the sick leave to which these men are entitled. Established postmen are entitled to six months sick leave on full pay, and six months further sick leave on half-pay. Unestablished postmen for the first six months have two-thirds pay and for the next six months half pay. Now, I think, so long as we are as generous as that, I am justified in saying when I am challenged that we do treat our public servants well. I think it would be hard for them to find better treatment in private employment. Another hon. Gentleman recommended this Inquiry on the grounds that horse allowance in certain rural districts was insufficient. Does the Committee think it is reasonable that we should set up all this machinery of Inquiry by Select Committee in order to find out whether in some part of the Loughborough Division the horse allowance of a rural postman is sufficient, or how often some postman, owing to a snowstorm, is left waiting at a cross road for the arrival of a mailcart?

*MR. LEVY: I suggested that adequate shelter should be given to these men, and that the Government should be exemplary employers.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman is a very good one, because even if we erected shelters at these cross roads I think it is extremely probable that we should have to employ and pay for police to protect them. I do not think that is a very practical suggestion on the part of the hon. Member. Then we come to my hon. friend the Member for Hoxton. My hon. friend was very indignant that a Motion such as that which we are discussing and speeches such as those we have listened to, should be subjected to any other than liberal consideration, and he asks us to accept his assurance that he is guided solely by a sense of public duty. I am anxious to make every allowance for the hon. Member, but does he think it right, while taking so much to himself, to allow nothing to other Members, and will not allow that they also may be actuated by public motives? The hon. Member complains of the whole of the permanent officials in the Post Office who are not on weekly wages, without exception; and last, but not least, he condemns the Financial Secretary. He complained—and he found a supporter in the hon. Member for South Donegal—that the Postmaster General did not give sufficient attention to his duty.

*MR. HAY: I never said that, and I must ask my hon. friend, if he desires to quote me, to remember what I did say. What I did say was that since the noble

Lord had become Postmaster General, he had lost a great deal of that energy he had previously possessed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: What was the complaint of the two hon. Gentlemen? The complaint, in effect, was that the Postmaster General was a tool in the hands of the Treasury. That was my hon. friend's complaint, and his statement was warmly approved by the hon. Member for South Donegal—that the Postmaster General was a serf to the Treasury; and then in the next sentence, almost, the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Donegal said, instead of having the Postmaster General here to answer for himself, the defence of the Post Office was put into the hands of a clerk and a puppet who had no control over it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I deny that I ever used such a word in my life. I neither said "puppet" nor "puppy."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Either statement might be true, but both cannot be true, and the hon. Member should decide on which horse he is going to ride before he comes down to the House and makes charges of this kind. Now, I have examined at great length the round of grievances which have been put forward as a basis for this reduction, and I do not, and the Government does not, hold that in the allegations that are made there is any substantial ground for this Inquiry. I speak with some sense of responsibility on this matter. The Post Office is a gigantic service. Upon its efficiency and regular working depends the convenience, not only of all our commercial system, but our whole national life. It is one of the Revenue Departments, and its contribution to the Exchequer, though it has not grown to the extent of some of the taxes, is an important contribution. We are the guardians of the efficiency of the service, and of the revenue derived from that service, and we cannot devolve upon other people the inquiries we ought to make ourselves. But we consider that it would be a grave dereliction of duty on our part to throw this great service into the turmoil and confusion of a Parliamentary Inquiry, with the knowledge that such an Inquiry would not be final—hon. Gentlemen who have supported this Amendment have declared that to talk about finality in this matter is absurd—with the knowledge that there is no finality in it, with the knowledge that what is done today for the Post Office must be done tomorrow for every other Department employing a large number of Government servants, until returns to this House will more and more depend on the willingness of Members to purchase the support of those who are in public employment by promises of concessions at the public expense, instead of securing their support, like that of other citizens, on public grounds and national interests.

*(10.50.) MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) referred to the grievances of the men employed in the Dublin Post Office in reference to the findings of the Tweedmouth Committee. He had recently called the attention of the Financial Secretary to the proceedings of an indignation meeting held in Dublin, at which 500 postal servants were present, and where a resolution was passed calling on the Government to carry out the recommendations of that Committee. Under those recommendations split duties were to be abolished, and a nine hours rest conceded. But that Committee sat five years ago, and its recommendations had not yet been carried out. The hon. Gentleman had said that if Members of the postal service had a grievance they could go to the heads of their Departments. Surely the Financial Secretary knew that anybody who took that course would be a marked man, and would lose all chance of promotion, and possibly his situation as well. The Department in Dublin was seething with discontent. At the public meeting recently held, at which the Lord Mayor, several Members of Parliament, and representatives of the commercial community were present, all agreed that the men had substantial grievances and pledged themselves to do what they could to bring them to the notice of the Postmaster General. He had brought the matter before the Financial Secretary, and had received a courteous reply. But soft words

buttered no parsnips, and the grievances remained unredressed. It was the duty of the State to act as a model employer, to see that the men enjoyed fair conditions of labour, and were not called upon to work excessive hours. He joined in the appeal for an independent Inquiry into these grievances. But if the Inquiry was to share the fate of the Tweedmouth Committee, it would be better to have no inquiry at all, because to have findings brought in but not carried out was worse than useless. Recently in Dublin there had been a terrible scandal. The head of the Department had been censured for his action in connection with the Corcoran defalcations. When, however, promotions came to be made, strangers were imported into the city and put over the heads of the men already there. This treatment was protested against, but the statement was alleged to have been made by the Controller that there was not a man in the Department capable of taking a responsible position. He branded that statement as a falsehood. The promotions were awarded to favoured individuals, and so long as there were men who, having passed competitive examinations, were competent to take the positions, it was not fair to bring men in from the country and place them over their heads. It could not be argued that these men were better qualified. How could men from a little country Post Office be better qualified for the work than those who had graduated in such a service as that in the General Post Office, Dublin? As a result of this system the citizens were suffering. At Christmas no less than 20,000 letters and 17,000 packets were delayed for several days, purely as the result of the way things were done. It might be a matter of sentiment, but it was very hard that Irish fathers and mothers, who looked for letters from their kith and kin in America and other lands, should be disappointed in this way on Christmas day in consequence of the bad system in existence at the Post Office. Another matter of complaint was the "trippage" allowance to supernumeraries, who were sent to Queenstown and other places to sort the mails. The men with permanent positions received 7s. a day in addition to their ordinary pay, but supernumeraries who were engaged received only about 3½d. an hour. As the trip lasted, say, six hours, such a man would get the magnificent sum of 1s. 7d. or 1s. 9d. to defray his extra cost of subsistence. He appealed to the Financial Secretary to see whether the matters to which he had referred could not be remedied; if that were done he was satisfied that it would be found that in Dublin there was a staff second to none in the Kingdom, capable of filling any positions they might be called upon to occupy. He asked that the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee should be carried out; that excessive overtime should be discontinued; that an increased allowance should be given to the men he mentioned on trippage duty, and that promotion from the ranks should be given to competent men who had to pass a competitive examination.

*(11.3.) MR. BUTCHER (York) said that in a great Department like the Post Office it was inevitable that from time to time grievances or alleged grievances should arise, which demanded inquiry and sometimes redress. The question at issue seemed to be as to the proper tribunal to adjudicate upon these grievances. Nobody could deny that in the normal and ordinary course, the proper tribunal to make the Inquiry was the Department itself. The responsibility was cast upon the Department to see that the grievances brought before it were considered. He could conceive of nothing more certain to undermine the authority and to lessen the sense of responsibility of a Department than the doctrine that whenever grievances were brought before the House of Commons the House should order a Committee to examine into and adjudicate upon those grievances. Such a course would be most dangerous and injurious to the public service. He did not say that circumstances could not arise in which a Committee of Inquiry would be necessary. If it were shown that substantial grievances existed, and that the Post Office Department were incapable of dealing with them, then it might be necessary to appoint such a Committee. He was not, however, satisfied that any such case had been made out. He had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Member who moved the reduction, and he believed he was right in saying that he had not

brought forward one specific instance of a grievance. One would have expected that when a Parliamentary Inquiry was demanded, specific instances where justice had been denied to the employees and where grievances had failed to obtain the redress to which they were entitled would have been brought forward. Certain cases have been put forward by other Members, but after listening to the most careful speech of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, he was satisfied that the grievances complained of had been carefully considered by the Department, and had been fairly and properly adjudicated upon. After endeavouring to approach this question with an open mind, he had come to the conclusion that no case had been made out for a Parliamentary Inquiry, and he should have no hesitation whatever in supporting the Government upon this question.

(11.10.) MR. KEIR HARDIE said he wished to refer to the wages paid to women in the Postal service.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That would be out of order upon this Amendment.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said the Secretary to the Treasury had refused the appointment of a Special Committee, partly because every employee was free to make his or her grievances known. In theory that was so, but in practice every employer of labour in the House knew how difficult it was for the poorer paid employees to make their grievances known and secure their redress. In the Postal service there were now Trades Union organisations for the various branches of the service, and all that those organisations claimed was that, through their officials, they should be allowed to approach the heads of Departments in order to secure a redress of their grievances. [Ministerial cries of "No, no."] That, at any rate, was their claim. They claimed that the officials should be allowed to approach the heads of Departments with the view of securing a redress of their grievances. There were employers of labour in the House who had good sense enough to treat directly with Trade Unions in all labour disputes, and he ventured to assert that there was not an employer of labour in the House of Commons who had adopted that method who was not ready to admit that this course was the most satisfactory and the most economical, and one which conduced to the best relationship between employer and employed. If that was true of the private employer, surely it was equally true of the State. These men were the servants of the Post Office, which employed no less than 160,000 persons, and each one of them had a grievance. What the Post Office Department asked was that each of those 160,000 persons should individually place his grievance before the Post Office authorities. The Trades Union method was that their grievance should be referred to the Trades Union organisation and then presented, not one by one but in bulk, through the officials of that Trades Union organisation, which was a more satisfactory and a more economical way of dealing with them and was the best which the State could adopt. He wished to enter his protest against the doctrine which had been preached in this debate of the State of obtaining its labour in the cheapest market, and he more particularly wished to protest against that doctrine being applied to women. What was considered to be a good law to apply to the Postmaster General ought to be an equally good law for the humblest employee of the Post Office. Every hon. Member who had given even a superficial consideration to this question knows that if a living cannot be earned by wages for honourable work it has to be eked out by what can be picked up from the streets.

Reference had been made to the Tweedmouth Committee and to the fact that the Post Office employees were dissatisfied because its findings had not been carried out. The Secretary of the Treasury seemed to imagine, because the Tweedmouth Committee did not give satisfaction to the employees, that therefore a Committee appointed by the House of Commons would also fail in this respect. He would remind the hon. Member that the objection to the Tweedmouth Committee was that it was not representative either of the House of Commons or of the employees whose grievances it was called upon to investigate. It was a purely official Committee. [Cries of "No, no!"] There was only one person upon it who was not an

official, and all officials could be relied upon to stand by one another in a matter of this kind. Upon a Committee of that sort appointed to investigate the grievances of Post Office employees there should have been some representative of the employees to see that their case was properly brought out. What was asked for now was that there should be a Committee appointed to investigate the grievances of the employees.

One outcome of this debate would be to give a strong stimulus to the movement on the part of the Post Office employees to send a representative from their own ranks to the House of Commons. He could give case after case of grievances suffered by Post Office employees which would fully justify their demand for a Committee of Inquiry. The Tweedmouth Committee was distinctly limited by the terms of reference under which it was appointed by Mr. Arnold Morley, who was then Postmaster General. It had been distinctly laid down that it was no part of the duty of the Post Office to make profit, but it should be worked for the future convenience and not reduced to the level of a mere profit-making machine. It was this desire on the part of the Post Office officials to make profit which lay at the root of all the troubles which the House had been discussing in the debate that evening. The Post Office did not exist to make profit. It supplied a great public convenience and it was the duty of the House of Commons to see that every one of its employees, from the highest to the lowest, should be treated in such a way as to set a good example to private employers of labour.

(11.20.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 110; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 119.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
Macveagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thompson, Dr E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Thomas Bayley and
Mr. Claude Hay.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton)
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Hain, Edward
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'rry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Howard, John (Kent, F'versham
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col H. L. B. (Cambs
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H (D'mfriesshire
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (W'lthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pierpoint, Robert
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (T'unton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby, de Eresby Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

(11.30.) CAPTAIN NORTON said he desired to draw attention to the conditions under which the women clerks of the General Post Office worked. He referred to those who were employed in the Money Order Office, the Postal Order Office, the Clearing House, and the Savings Bank. He might, for the convenience of the Committee, explain that this class of employees first came into existence in 1881 under Mr. Forster, and at that time he laid down that the minimum living wage for these women clerks the sum of £65 per annum, increasing by yearly increments of £3. This state of affairs went on until 1897. Then after the sitting of the Tweedmouth Committee that initial salary was lowered by £10, namely to £55 per annum, increasing by yearly increments of £2 10s., so that it took these women clerks under present conditions about four years before they were in the same position as their predecessors—many of whom were still serving—were in when they first joined the service. The number of these women clerks have fallen from 938 to 650, and therefore the matter that he was going to bring forward of doing

justice to them would not entail very great expense upon the Treasury. What did the Post Office demand of those who filled this particular position? They demanded that they should be of eminent respectability, good education, high physical standard, and that they be between eighteen and twenty years of age. Their salary had been reduced without any change whatever in the conditions from £65 to £55 per annum. Why? Was it that the cost of living since 1881 had decreased in London? Was it that there was any change in regard to the entrance examination for this position? On the contrary two more subjects had been added, and as a consequence the expense of preparing for the examination in order to enter the service had undoubtedly increased. He should like the Committee to realise the position in which these women clerks found themselves. He might point out that the Government had insisted upon their occupying what must be called a certain social position. Their parents must keep them without doing any remunerative work until they are eighteen years of age, and they must give them a good education, and yet they found themselves after entering on a Government appointment, for the first four years of their career in a worse position than the daughter of an agricultural labourer who had been able to earn some money in various occupations beforehand, and who later on takes up the position of a housemaid in a gentleman's family. A young woman in the position of a house maid occupied a position of comparative luxury, being well fed, well housed, and able to provide herself with clothing and other necessaries. In consequence of this the women clerks had sent a petition to the Postmaster General. What was the reply to their petition. The Postmaster General first of all said that there was no ground for restoration to £65 a year, that they knew the conditions on entering, and that no alteration in the conditions had taken place. The hon. Member did not deny that they knew the conditions on entering. A large number of these young women were drawn from the provinces, where they would get better lodging for 3s. per week than they could get for 6s. in London. Then the Postmaster General went on to make the astounding statement that the petitions had been badly advised in making the assertion contained in Clause 7, which he objected to because he considered it a very extravagant statement. The statement in Clause 7 was that those of the petitioners who did not receive assistance from their parents or a supplement of income from other sources had to curtail their food allowance, which exposed them to the many evils arising from insufficient nourishment. The Postmaster General objected to them pointing out that they must either starve themselves, or spend so little on their personal apparel that they were practically objects of pity or ridicule to the other clerks, who happened to live with their parents, and therefore could spend the bulk of their salary on dress. The Postmaster General wound up by declining to grant an interview. In consequence of that, they sent a second petition to the Postmaster General, who, being ably supported by an admirable secretary, who like all the permanent Government officials in this country did his work thoroughly well. The secretary with great tact declined to forward the second petition, because he knew that it would be too much for the Postmaster General. This second petition was to prove to the Postmaster General that he was misinformed with reference to the statement he made in reply to their former petition. It gave details, showing how they disposed of this wretched income given by the Government. The various items included in the necessary cost of living amounted to £52 per annum, so that after these women had maintained themselves, though, as he considered insufficiently, they had £3 left wherewith to dress themselves. It was absolutely impossible for these women to dress themselves decently on that sum. Of course, he did not expect the hon. Gentleman who was about to reply to have any special knowledge on these subjects. He would be under the impression, as many young unmarried men were, that females wore no undergarments. [Laughter.] Well, young men were generally ignorant of these matters. [Laughter.] The hon. Gentleman might be under the impression that the women clerks had nothing to pay for such dress.

He presumed the innocence of the hon. Gentleman was such that he believed that corsets were made exactly the same in front as behind—[Laughter]—but he could assure him that it was absolutely impossible under any conditions for any young woman to dress herself on £3 a year. Therefore, they were absolutely obliged to dress themselves in the most penurious manner, or to deprive themselves of necessaries in other directions, if they did not receive help from their parents. He held that the Government service should not be for those only who had happy and comfortable homes. Those women who had to rely solely on their salary, had left only £3 a year for their clothing, for their annual holiday, and for recreation. What those women asked for was remuneration which would enable them to live up to the standard of health, education, and respectability which the Post Office demanded of them. Their work, and he was sure the hon. Member would not deny it, was of a responsible character, and was in addition very trying and detrimental to health.

It might be urged that women outside the Post Office were worse paid. His contention was that there was no comparison between women engaged in typewriting and similar work outside the Post Office, and those who were similarly engaged inside the Post Office, although the Government were supposed to give a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. It might be said that if that were the state of affairs only women who had homes in London should join the Service. But if that were the case why did the Government hold examinations for this Service in the great provincial towns. It was because they thought it desirable that women clerks should be drawn, not solely from London, but from the country generally. If there were any sweating in connection with the Post Office it was exemplified in the highest degree in the employment of those women who positively had not a living wage. If Mr. Fawcett thought £65 a year a living wage in 1881, surely £55 could not be regarded as a living wage now, especially when it was remembered that lodgings of the most modest character had doubled within the last thirty years, and that in addition to that, taxes have been put on bread, sugar, tea, and jam. The main food of those women consisted mainly of tea, and bread and jam, articles which were very highly taxed, in addition to which the price of meat had recently risen. Again, in some of the poorer parts of London rates had gone up to 9s. in the £, and it was manifest that those who were in the habit of letting lodgings would as a consequence charge more for their rooms. All he asked was that the old initial salary of £65 should be restored. There was no demand with reference to increment or increased pay. He would further point out to the Committee that those young women would be the mothers of a future generation. Some of them were married already, and it was quite evident that their health suffered and that the future of the race would suffer also. He did not think he was making an extravagant demand, and he trusted the hon. Gentlemen would hold out some hope that there would be a return to the state of things which existed prior to 1897, and that the women clerks employed by the Post Office should be given what was considered a living wage.

Mr. TALBOT (Oxford University) said he should like to say a few words in support of the view of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just spoken, which seemed to him to be not an unreasonable one. That case was differentiated from others which had been discussed earlier in the evening in one respect, namely, that those young women were absolutely incapable, except indirectly, of exercising any political pressure. It was, further, a singular example of reduction of income. The Committee were well accustomed to people asking for increases of salary, but in that case all they were asked to do was to restore the salary to the amount originally fixed by Mr. Fawcett. That was not an extravagant demand, and whether his hon. friend was enabled to consider it favourably or not, he hoped he would not shut the door absolutely against it. The memorial to the Postmaster General to which the hon. and gallant Gentleman referred was very reasonable, and was most temperately worded. It stated—

"Although your petitioners fully recognise that after a certain number of years their salaries may be sufficient, they respectfully suggest to your Lordship that there is pressing present need which deserves consideration."

He was sure that his hon. friend's heart was with the demand even if his voice would be against it; but he hoped that his hon. friend would not absolutely shut the door against it.

(11.50.) MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No one will allege that my right hon. friend has any ulterior motive to serve in making an appeal of this kind except the honest desire to do what is right by public servants. I do not complain of the manner in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman raised this question, though I regret he did not give me any indication that he was about to raise it. I confess, however, that from the facts, as stated by him, I am inclined to draw a different inference to that which he drew. His inference was that the rate established by Mr. Fawcett many years ago could not be more, and was probably less, than what should be paid today. The inference I draw is that we should be extremely careful when establishing a service in fixing high rates of pay. It is very easy to increase the rate of pay, but very difficult to reduce it. In this particular case what has been done has been to reduce the minimum, and to re-arrange the increases so that in a certain number of years the clerks receive the same salary that they would have received under the old system. It is suggested that the initial rate is too low for young women living in London, and no one can be insensible to the difficulty of young women, in the initial stages of their career, living in London, and not having homes of their own. I do not contend that we ought to encourage young women from the provinces to come to London for these situations, but, at the same time, it is not possible for us to refuse to young women not living in London the right to compete for these Government positions. I do not know whether the Committee understand what the initial rate of pay is. These young women enter the service between the ages of eighteen and twenty, and in their first year they get a guinea a week. Is that unfair or unreasonable pay? Does it compare unfavourably with what is paid to young women in similar employment outside the Government service? As soon as they complete one year, they get an increase of £2 10s., and they continue annually to receive £2 10s. rise, until they get £70, and from £70 to £100 they get a rise of £5 per annum. I do not think that these are unreasonable terms, or that they compare unfavourably with terms offered to young women in other employments. If my right hon. friend, or the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, has evidence to show that the initial rate compares unfavourably with what is paid in outside employment, I will, of course, look into the matter, and confer with the Postmaster General regarding it. But as the matter stands, I do not think it is unreasonable pay, or that I should be justified in holding out a hope that we will go back to the unduly high minimum fixed by Mr. Fawcett. The first Amendment discussed covered the whole of this Vote, and I therefore hope the Committee will allow the Vote to be now taken.

CAPTAIN NORTON said he wished to move the reduction of the Vote by £100. He only asked the hon. Gentleman to go back to the initial pay which was given to the predecessors of those women, who did the same work, under the same conditions.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think if I put the Motion for reduction now, the Vote will follow.

(11.57) Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,961,715, be granted for the said Service."—(*Captain Norton.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 83; Noes, 145. (Division List No. 120.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-Helme, Norval Watson
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
Macveagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings
Thompson, Dr. E C (Monagh'n N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Weir, James Galloway
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Norton and Mr. Warner.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C (Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B. (Cambs
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H (D'mfriesshire
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (W'thamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parker, Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Penn, John
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.

Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

Objection being taken to further proceeding.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

(12.8) Question put. "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 149; Noes, 79. (Division List, 121.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshi'e
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nder'y
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H L B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Mitchell William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parker, Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Penn, John
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel J. H. (Hertford, E.)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarv'nshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
Macveagh Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman (Hastings
Thompson, Dr. E. C. (Monagh'nN
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

AND PURCHASE ACTS (IRELAND) (RULES ISSUED BY THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION).

(12.25) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E,) said the object of the Motion he rose to move was to annul Order 1 in the new rules of the Purchase Department of the Irish Land Commission which were published on the 17th of March last. Order 1 was an addition to Order 14 of the main body of the rules, and provided that if the Commission were otherwise satisfied as to security for the advance and that the purchaser was in exclusive occupation of the holding it might either dispense with inspection or limit it as it thought fit. Rule 14 which was published in March, 1897, after the passing of the Land Act of 1896, provided that in every case of an agreement to purchase the application should be referred to an inspector or one of the assistant commissioners to report as to the security for the advance, and on such other matters as to the Land Commission might direct, and in such form as it might from time to time direct. Tha was the present procedure. When a landlord and his tenants had by negotiation agreed upon sale and purchase the application for the advance came before the Land Commission, and was referred to a skilled inspector, who, acting under a memorandum of directions, visited each holding, and reported to the Land Commission whether the holding was or was not full security for the advance, and whether the intending purchaser was *bona fide* and in full occupation of his holding. Great abuses had frequently been detected, as, for instance, a thoroughly insolvent tenant borrowing stock for the inspection, or in other ways attempting to deceive the inspector. The object of that machinery was to secure the State against fraud and consequent loss, and the reason why the addition to the rule was of such importance was because one of the arguments used the other day with great force by the Chief Secretary himself in favour of the continuation of the policy of land purchase was the security of the transaction and the safety of the State from loss. How was that security achieved? It was achieved to a great extent by the process of inspection to which he had referred, and to the care of the Land Commission in making advances. As a result of their inspectors' reports,

the Land Commission in an enormous number of cases refused altogether to make advances or cut down the amount of the advances, when they found that a tenant under pressure by his landlord by threat of eviction or other means had been induced to sign of agreement for purchase for a sum greater than the value of his holding. The security of the State was safeguarded by the tenants interest in the holding. If he applied for an advance sufficient to buy out at a fair value the landlords interest, then his interest was an ample margin for the State. In many cases, owing to illegitimate pressure, a tenant signed an application for an advance, covering not only the whole of the landlord's interest, but the whole of the tenant's interest also. The result was that he was asking for the full value of the holding, with the effect that the whole system of land purchase was seriously endangered.

He (Mr. Dillon) confessed that he was more interested in the maintenance of this practice from the point of view of the protection of the tenant against illegitimate pressure. What happened was that hundreds of times every year the tenant was squeezed by illegitimate pressure in regard to arrears to sign an agreement for purchase at a value greatly in excess of the true value. He was a believer in land purchase as the only solution of the problem. He read with immense interest a passage upon this point from the very eloquent speech of the Chief Secretary, who stated that in regard to land purchase the State had incurred no losses and was exposed to no risk, and that out of 30,000 purchasers who were paying to the State he had no bad debts to show. The Chief Secretary stated that there was only £463 in arrear out of the total of £170,214 a year. That was a great testimony to the honesty of the Irish tenantry. He believed that not a single penny would be lost to the State so long as those purchases were honestly carried out. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that the State had not lost one shilling in Ireland by land purchase, and that he had no bad debts to show. There was, however, a very convenient way of clearing bad debts off, and that was by writing them off. [AN HON. MEMBER: But they must show them.] But they had a peculiar way of writing off bad debts in the House of Commons. He would not pursue the point further beyond stating that in his opinion the State never would lose by honest and fairly conducted dealings in regard to land purchase. He wished to direct the attention of the House to one particular case. Under the Public Loans Works Act of 1900 there occurred the following item—

"J. Fitzgerald: amount of advance, £3,000; amount repaid, £200 9s. 10d.; amount written off, £2,799 10s. 2d."

In the face of this he did not see how the right hon. Gentleman could state that not a single shilling had been lost by land purchase.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Under what Act did that take place, and why does it come under public loans?

AN HON. MEMBER: And what became of the land?

MR. DILLON said he mentioned this case because he was afraid these bad debts were being written off in the dark. This case was one in which an advance was made to Mr. Fitzgerald under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1895, which was Lord Ashbourne's Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: I alluded in my speech to the Acts of 1891 and 1896, and the figures I gave were applicable to those Acts.

MR. DILLON said he did not think that really touched the force of his argument.

MR. WYNDHAM: But it affects the accuracy of my statement.

MR. DILLON said he would not pursue the point, although the Chief Secretary distinctly stated that the State had incurred no loss in consequence of land purchase in Ireland. He had no desire to press the matter any further because it did not affect in the least his argument, which was intended to show the danger of loosening the system under which money was advanced. What was the

nature of this transaction? Mr. Fitzgerald obtained an advance of £3,000 to purchase his holding of sixty-six acres in the County of Cork from his own mother. It was abundantly evident that the mother and son had conspired together to sell this holding for vastly more than its proper value. When the holding ran into arrears and the Land Commission took it up, the Commissioners were obliged to pay £149 arrears for headrent. This holding, which had originally been let for £150 per annum to Fitzgerald, was afterwards let upon a lease of twenty years, at a rent of £58. That was only one-third of the rent, and that was the basis upon which it had been sold by Mrs. Fitzgerald to her son. In this case it was not an example of pressure being placed upon the tenant, but an instance of collusion, and the result was that a great loss fell upon the State, and the whole system of land purchase was thus discredited. He would content himself by referring hon. Members who were interested in the subject to page 6 of the "Supplementary Volume of the Fry Commission." It was a kind of bible for the Irish landlords, and they were perpetually referring to it. He sat and listened to the whole thing, and it was like a nightmare when he thought of it. There was a great deal of information in it. It contained a list of about 150 cases of farms on which advances had been made, and which were in the hands, at that time, of the Land Commission solicitor, to recover the money if he could for the State. [The hon. Member then proceeded to quote some of the cases.]

MR. WYNDHAM: Are these not cases under the Church Act?

MR. DILLON: How could they be under the Church Act? How could the Marquess of Waterford sell under the Church Act? The Church Act only dealt with church lands and glebe lands. His own recollection was that they were sales under the Act of 1881 or the Act of 1885. What happened was an illustration of the great abuse that arose from undue pressure being put on that tenant to give an excessive price. The Marquess of Waterford got, of course, as the landlord always did, his price for the holdings. When the tenant proprietors fell into arrears with their payments the holdings were put up for sale, and the Marquess of Waterford himself offered for them. There were many more cases in the Return from which he gave these illustrations. The Marquess of Waterford, by putting pressure on the the tenants, obtained from them an agreement to buy at an excessive price, and, having pocketed the price, he got back his holdings.

MR. WYNDHAM: Was there any liability on the holdings?

MR. DILLON: Certainly there was the liability to pay the estate. He should like to know how many English landlords could borrow at 2½ per cent. If all English landlords were allowed to borrow from the state at that rate the national debt would be doubled. The result of this operation was that the Marquis of Waterford was able to affect a loan from the State of this money which was intended to transfer the land to the tenants, and to give them the land back. In another case, on the estate of the Marquess of Waterford, £3,744 was advanced on one farm, which was afterwards sold to the Marquess of Waterford for £233. On the Marquess of Londonderry's estate, a tenant received an advance of £900 on his farm, but when it was afterwards put up for sale for arrears there were no bidders. In other words, on the Marquess of Londonderry's estate, in the heart of Down, a sale was boycotted. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would proclaim the district immediately. Those were important facts, and facts which ought to impress the House with the necessity of not allowing the one protection which existed against proceedings of the character he had described to be relaxed. In the early days of the Land Commission, the inspection was not so strict, and Mr. Fitzgerald, and other gentlemen were able to obtain advances, but since 1896 it had been more detailed. The excellent effect which inspection produced, and its results in reducing prices in many instances, had been a favourite bogey of the Irish landlord, against which they poured a stream of abuse, and characterised

as an intolerable grievance. It was no grievance, but an absolute necessity, for the purpose of protecting both the tenant and the State, as well as the future of the whole system of land purchase, and instead of the system of inspection being loosened, it should be made more and more stringent. There was another abuse which ought to be stopped, and that was the system of relatives selling holdings to each other. It was a common practice for a father to put a son in possession of a holding, no real rent passed, and the tenancy was a bogus one. Then the father and son applied to the Land Commission for an advance of £3,000 or £4,000 to buy the farm. The whole thing was bogus but it was done constantly in Ireland, and was a gross abuse of the whole system, and was dangerous to the future of land purchase in Ireland. For many years the landlords had been extremely hostile to the system of inspection, naturally perhaps, because, of course, it interfered with the operation of working up the price of farms. They did their very best to get the whole system broken up before the Fry Commission. At page 37 of the main volume of the Commission, the question of inspection before sale was dealt with. The Fry Commission absolutely refused to recommend the abolition of the system. What they said was that they approved of the suggestion which had been made by the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland, that a landlord ought to be enabled on a payment of a fee to have an inspection before agreeing to sell, in order that he might know what advance the Land Commission would sanction, but there was no word of doing away with or limiting inspection. The law could now be set aside by open application and on cause shown. It was set aside, in his opinion quite rightly, in the case of the Dillon estate, on the application of the Congested Districts Board. Inspection was part of the regular procedure, and if it were done away with the right hon. Gentleman would not be able to get up again and say that the State had no bad debts to show.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.) formally seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented His Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to annul Order I. (Inspection of holdings.)"—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

(12.50.) MR. WYNDHAM: Since I studied the Irish Land question I have come to the view and I have expressed the view that compulsory purchase, apart altogether from its justice or its financial feasibility, would be a mechanical impossibility, and I think the speech to which we have just listened must have convinced even the hon. Member for South Tyrone that that is the case, because if the question of purchase is to be approached in the spirit exhibited in that speech it must be clear to any man that administrative and judicial difficulties would be piled one on another to a point which must make the whole edifice collapse. At this late hour I will put forward only one or two general propositions in a very few sentences, but I must be allowed to reply—and I would beg the Press, if I may make that appeal, to report what I am going to say—to the attack made by the hon. Member on the testimony which I paid, in a speech the other day, to the punctuality with which tenants in Ireland have repaid their debts, and to the solvency of the whole scheme of land purchase in Ireland. I stand by every word I then said, and I ask the House to take those words as I gave them. I said that there had been no loss to the State over land purchase. That is true. But I did not mean in that general statement to say that no man during the course of thirty-two years had ever become a bankrupt. What I said was that the State had not lost a penny, and had made money, and in a great financial operation of that kind it was wise that there should be such a margin as to safeguard the Treasury from the risk of loss. I said then, and I repeat to-night that there has been no loss, even if we include the earlier Acts before we understood the business as well as we now understand it. Even under the operation of these Acts, from which the hon. Member culled the cases he alluded to this evening, during the thirty-two years of land purchase there has been no loss. I went on to say the other night that there was no risk of

loss, and in support of that separate statement I introduced the operation of the Acts of 1891 and 1896, and I said that under these two Acts, out of a body of, I think, 30,000 tenants paying to the State in round figures £170,000, only one man was eighteen months in arrears. That was a true statement which I adhere to. It was an illustration of my general argument proving my second proposition, namely, that there was no risk. It is not a matter of opinion, but it is a matter of actual knowledge. Therefore, the statement I made stands until some better argument can be adduced against it than has been advanced this evening. I have thought it necessary to say that because I think the parade of figures adduced by the hon. Member might lead those not familiar with the subject to suppose that I overstated my case when I introduced the Land Bill. I did not overstate my case, which stands exactly as it did then.

Now let me come to the general view put forward by the hon. Member. If we are to inquire seriously into every bargain made between landlord and tenant; if in inquiring into every such bargain we are to consider not the interests of the State but the judicial rights which may appertain to one or the other, then of course you can never have compulsory purchase, and you cannot have even voluntary purchase at any greater pace than that which is going on at the present time, and which has been complained of time after time. There has hardly been a day since I was Chief Secretary for Ireland upon which I have not been asked one question and sometimes two or three questions as to why certain sales have not proceeded more rapidly, and my answers have generally been that the delay was owing to these constant inspections. I know that has been the character of the bulk of my answers and the delay has not been due to any remissness on the part of the Government.

There are various questions which of necessity must arise, and if you trust these tribunals at all you must trust them when they say that a particular bargain is a safe one for the State. The existing rule is not an Act of this House. It is simply one of the rules which fill 1,200 pages complied by the Land Commission. Day after day Nationalist Members have called attention to the difficulty of carrying out these rules owing to their complicated nature, and when at last, in response to appeals put forward week after week and month after month in this House, the Land Commission attempt to simplify that procedure, then they are called to book and told that they must not alter even a word or a comma in this wonderful rule or any of the rules which fill up those 1,200 pages, or by so doing they contend that we shall imperil the whole fabric of land purchase in Ireland. If we are to proceed in this spirit, we shall certainly get to the case of Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce. If you give the Commissioners no room for elasticity, you cannot promote land purchase except at a snail's pace. Look at this freedom of action which the Land Commission asks for. I will not say what a fair rent is, because I do not believe than anybody knows, but certainly fair rents are fixed with the view that the tenant may be expected to pay it for fifteen years, and if purchase takes place, except in examples so rare that we may dismiss them altogether, the purchase instalment is not to be higher, but in almost every case lower than the rent. Are you going to tell the Land Commission that when rents have been fixed for the second time at a huge cost to the State, and after a vast amount of time has been spent upon the process by a machinery that is cumbrous, that there is to be a further inspection. If that is the contention of the hon. Member for East Mayo, then I say that land purchase in Ireland is an impossibility.

*(1.0.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that if he thought it necessary to intervene in the debate for a couple of minutes, he had a perfect right to do so. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members ought to remember that this was the only opportunity under the Rules of the House which they would have of raising this question. He would say at once that in his opinion he thought the hon. Member for East Mayo had raised a serious question, but the speech which the hon. Member had made upon was of a still more serious character. He did not think it would be safe to part altogether with the inspection of holdings.

He thought the British tax-payer had a right to look at this matter straight in the face, and he was afraid that land purchase might be utterly discredited if the thing was allowed to proceed without let or hindrance, simply upon an agreement between landlord and tenant. He submitted that there was a real danger in this matter. He was in a difficult position, because he saw the force of the Chief Secretary's remarks, that after rents had been fixed a second time, there was less if anything to be said for inspection. This was a great difficulty, and it was one upon which he was very reluctant to give an opinion. He thought the hon. Member for East Mayo had made a statement which went a long way to prejudice the cause which they all had so much at heart.

He would pass by the Fitzgerald case, and take the case of purchase by the Marquess of Waterford, which had been raised by the hon. Member. He did not care whether the land was sold under the Act of 1881 or 1885. In certain cases the tenants became bankrupt, and at the sale of the tenant's interest in the holding the Marquess of Waterford purchased the farm and became the owner subject to the liability to the State, and that was material because it was a question of the risk to the State. He understood the hon. Member was arguing the question of the danger of loss to the State, but really and truly the Marquess of Waterford was as good a security to the State as any other purchaser. He was very much afraid that the House and the public would be misled by what the hon. Member had said. He spoke as a sincere friend of land purchase, for in land purchase he saw the only way out of the Irish difficulty; therefore he was very jealous of anything being said that would tend to discredit the system which he believed was the only way out of this Irish mess. He agreed with the statement that the State even in these cases where the holdings had reverted to the landowner had lost nothing. He believed the right hon. Gentleman covered the whole period when he said there had been no loss. But he had been under the necessity of consulting the right hon. Gentleman's speech again and he found that he was simply referring in that statement to 30,000 purchasers, whilst there had been 60,000 purchasers. The Fitzgerald case had been cited to prove that there was risk of loss, and no doubt the hon. Gentleman was quite right in bringing it forward He had not got an answer to the question which he asked in regard to that case. What had become of the Fitzgerald land?

MR. WYNDHAM replied, but his answer was inaudible in the gallery.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that one thing that he wanted to be clear about was that this case had not resulted in a loss where a mistake had been made. The land was a valuable asset. He did not believe that even in the Fitzgerald case there would be real loss in the end. His hon. friend the Member for East Mayo had raised a serious question, and the Chief Secretary ought to face it and take it into consideration. It was all very well to say that the Land Commission must have a free hand, but the right hon. Gentleman must know that there was not public confidence in the Land Commission. Successive Governments had been entirely to blame for that. The Land Commission was at first appointed to represent all the parties to this question. It had no pretension to do that now. He must say that to allow the Land Commission to stop inspection in cases where it saw fit was going a long way indeed, and involved serious risk to the British taxpayers. He hoped the hon. Member would not proceed to a division. The discussion would do great good. He was concerned only for the cause of land purchase. He did not see why the Chief Secretary should have brought the question of compulsory sale into the argument. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman did not believe in it. But he had been long enough in the House to know that what the nation demanded, when not prejudicial to Great Britain, the nation would carrry.

Question put.

(1.9.) The House divided:—Ayes, 55 Noes, 113. (Division List No. 122.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Black, Alexander William
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarv'nshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
Macveagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sullivan, Donal
Weir, James Galloway

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Arcedale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scot
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Galloway, William Johnson
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth'
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis Lowestoft)
Lucas Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
Maxwell, W. J H (Dumfriesshire
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Penn, John
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 21st April, 1902.

BARON DUFFERIN AND CLANDEBOYE.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor, That the right of Terence John Temple, Baron Dufferin and Clandeboye, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord SPEAKER acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Barking Gas.
Omagh Urban District Gas.
Grand Junction Water.
Midland Railway.
Ticehurst Water.

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

London County Council (Money).

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not yet been complied with:—

Islington and Euston Railway [H.L.]
(Petition for additional Provision).

The same were ordered to lie upon the Table.

WEARDALE AND SHILDON DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.]

(PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION),

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL, ISLINGTON AND EUSTON RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

(PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION),

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Friday next.

BRADFORD CORPORATION BILL [H.L.],

RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.].

A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

WEST HAMPSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.]

Reported, with Amendments.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY (No 2.) BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 24th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

EXETER AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

HASTINGS TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

SOUTH SHIELDS, SUNDERLAND AND DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

MEXBOROUGH AND SWINTON TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

RUSTHALL MANOR BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1.) BILL.

Brought from the Commons.

HAMILTON GAS PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATIONAL BILL [H.L.].

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY (LUNATIC ASYLUMS) BILL [H.L.].

The LORD STANMORE, Chairman of the Select Committee, reported that the Lord Monteagle of Brandon was not present this day, and that the Committee continued sitting in his absence, all parties having consented thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

ABERTILLERY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL [H.L.],
BRADFORD CORPORATION BILL [H.L.],
BRADFORD-ON-AVON GAS BILL [H.L.],
RHYMNEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],
CONSETT WATER BILL [H.L.],
WEARDALE AND SHILDON DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.],
MARGATE CORPORATION WATER BILL [H.L.],
SOUTH-EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAYS BILL [H.L.],
WIGAN CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Strafford be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Massy; read and agreed to.

BRISTOL WATER BILL [H.L.],
LONGWOOD GAS BILL [H.L.],
RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.],
NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
BUXTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL [H.L.],
NORTHUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],
TYNESIDE TRAMWAYS AND TRAMROADS BILL [H.L.],
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Massy be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of Lord Monteagle of Brandon; read, and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

The Twentieth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1901. Part II. Salmon Fisheries.

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 5. (1902).

Correspondence relating to the Brussels Sugar Bounty Conference.

COLONIES.

Correspondence relating to the Sugar Conference at Brussels, 1901–1902.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Statistics of the Refugee Camps in South Africa.

ARMY.

Approximate estimate of expenditure under the Barracks Act of 1890, and Military Works Acts of 1897, 1899, and 1901.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return for the Quarter ended 31st March, 1902.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Treasury Minute, dated 15th April, 1902, declaring that Thomas Judd, artificer, War Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Standing Order No. LXXXVII. amended by leaving out the following words, viz.—

1. No original of any record or public document in the custody of the Master of the Rolls shall be required to be produced before the Committee of Privileges or any other Committee of this House without a written order for such production, signed by the Lord Chancellor or the Chairman of such Committee. Such records and documents shall be proved by certified copies as provided by the Public Record Act, 1838, 1st and 2nd Victoria, chap. 94.

And inserting in lieu thereof—

1. No original of any record or document in public custody in the United Kingdom shall be required to be produced before the Committee for Privileges without a written order for such production, signed by the Lord Chancellor or the Chairman of Committees. Such records and

documents shall be proved by copies as in ordinary legal proceedings pursuant to the Public Record Act, 1838, and the Documentary Evidence Acts subsequently passed.

And to be printed as amended. (No. 44.)

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1.) BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 45.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till Tomorrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 21st April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Woolwich, in the room of Colonel Edwin Hughes (Chiltern Hundreds). — (*Sir William Walrond.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENTS) BILL [BY ORDER].

(3.10.) MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.) intimated that he did not propose to proceed with his Motion for the rejection of the measure now, as it dealt with a large number of schemes other than the one to which he had to call attention, but he would ask permission after the Second Reading to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Does this Bill give power to the County Council to run omnibuses?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): No.

Bill read a second time.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the first Instruction on the Paper in regard to this Bill stood in his name, but as he willingly admitted his hon. friend the Member for East Marylebone could move it more effectively, he withdrew in his favour.

MR. BOULNOIS then moved that it be an Instruction to the Committee to omit Tramway No. 7 (Victoria Embankment). He said he was only concerned with this particular clause of the Bill, which he might well describe as an emasculate measure, seeing that in consequence of the action of certain local authorities, many of the proposals of the London County Council had had to be dropped. The clause in question sought power to run tramway cars on tramway lines along the Victoria Embankment, and he would not have taken this action had it not been for the fact that owing to this road being under the sole control of the London County Council, the people of London generally had no *locus standi* before the Committee upstairs, and although they objected to this scheme, if this clause were not taken out this afternoon the measure would go forward as unopposed. The proposal to construct a tramway along the Embankment had been rejected nine times. It had been before the House for thirty years, and it was last before the House in 1898, when it was rejected by a very large majority. The scheme introduced then was a much more sensible one than the present, for it proposed to join the junction of the lines on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge. The present scheme started from nowhere and led to nowhere. It started from the foot of the Houses of Parliament, and landed people at the foot of Blackfriars Bridge. He did not think this was really a desirable project. It was ridiculous to suppose that anybody on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge who desired to go to Blackfriars Bridge would cross Westminster Bridge,

and take a tram along the Embankment. The Embankment was used for what might be called swift traffic. It was intended to relieve the congestion of the traffic along the Strand, and he had no doubt it had greatly had that effect, but if Parliament were to sanction a tramway scheme along the former, cabmen and coachmen would again resort to the latter, and the congestion there would become as bad as ever. With regard to what might be called the sentimental objection to the scheme, one of the few things of which the people of London had reason to be proud was the Thames Embankment. It was the finest boulevard of the kind in the world, and when the trees along it came to maturity, there would be nothing to compare with it in Spring and Summer. It was really used by the people as a recreation ground in the widest sense. The London County Council itself had done a great deal to beautify and adorn it; it kept it up in a very costly manner; it had created gardens in which bands played; it had put up a kiosk for refreshments. The enjoyment of those who used the Embankment would be destroyed by the everlasting clang of the gong and the grating of wheels attached to the trams. The beauty of the Embankment, too, would be greatly discounted by the hideous overhead wires. If a plebiscite of the inhabitants of London were taken he would undertake to say that there would be an overwhelming majority against this vandalism and vulgarity. He did not believe that a tramway on the Embankment was desired by the greater portion of the working classes. It would not solve in the slightest manner the problem of their transit from their dwellings to their work, and of their housing. The people of London, who, he believed, were generally against the scheme, could not appear on the Committee upstairs and have their views represented. He therefore asked the House to reject the clause in question by accepting the Instruction he now moved.

*SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) in seconding the Instruction said he had for many years taken a great interest in this part of London. He was one of the Committee appointed by the House many years ago, who had laid before them the various disputes in regard to the title and laying out of the estates between the House and Charing Cross Station, a duty which he believed that Committee accomplished very much to the satisfaction of the House at the time, and this led the way to the excellent series of gardens and other grounds by which the Embankment was embellished. The æsthetic qualities of the embankment were a source of considerable pride to all of them, and they gladly took their friends along the thoroughfare in order to show the vast improvements which had been effected since the time, he well remembered, when the site was nothing but a gravel and mud bed occupied by barges and small craft. He had no objection to an electric tramway in its proper place. In Glasgow they could see how well tramways might be conducted, and how convenient they were. But they were not ornamental, nor did they form part of a pleasure garden, and to lay a tramway along the Thames Embankment would, in his opinion, be an act of the grossest vandalism. The gardens and avenues in that neighbourhood were of great credit to the London County Council, and he could not understand how a body which had shown so much taste in that direction, could bring forward again and again such a proposal as that before the House. Members would for ever regret their action if they allowed the Embankment to be covered by that which was not an amenity, hardly useful in that situation, and certainly not required. He, therefore, seconded the proposed Instruction.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Bill to omit Tramway No. 7 (Victoria Embankment)."—(*Mr. Boulnois.*)

(3.30.) MR. BARTLEY said that tramways might not be very attractive things, but in London, with its narrow streets and congested traffic, they were —if one liked so to regard them—a necessary evil. If the question was whether London was suitable for tramways, he might be found amongst those who were doubtful on the point; but, things being as they were, if there was one thoroughfare in London suitable for such a line, it was the Thames Embankment, and he certainly failed to understand how such a tramway would ruin

the beauty of the gardens. The Embankment, as a rule, was very little occupied, and a service of trams would relieve the congestion of the Strand. Recognising that they must put up with the inconvenience of trams and omnibuses, it was really extraordinary that year after year the attempt should be made to prevent almost the only thoroughfare suitable for this mode of locomotion being so used. He acknowledged that the plan was not a very satisfactory one, as the line did not lead from or to anywhere, but it was rather hard to use that argument, seeing that Parliament had prevented the Council carrying out the proper scheme by running the lines across Westminster Bridge. In 1899, because he believed the proposal to be a most reasonable one, he supported the scheme for carrying the tramway over Westminster Bridge, and inasmuch as this was a step in that direction he could not oppose it. It was certainly a proposal which should go before a Committee for consideration, and he should, therefore, vote against the Instruction.

MR. JOHN BURNS said the hon. Member for East Marylebone seemed not to have overcome his archaic objections to everything beyond the old-fashioned mail-coach. Underlying his speech was a desire to hark back to the days of Sam Weller, a desire which was incompatible with the need in London of rapid transit as a contribution towards the solution of the housing problem. He appealed to the House to dissociate itself from the antiquated views of the hon. Member. The Embankment, on account of its width, was perhaps the most suitable road in London for a tramway. Its average width, between the walls on either side, from Westminster to Blackfrairs, was over 100 feet. That would permit of an electric tramway being worked, not by the overhead system of traction—as the County Council had decided against that—but by a noiseless system of conduit traction, with the electric contact between the two rails, unseen by anyone. thus doing away with the æsthetic objections piled up by the hon. Member on that hypothesis that the overhead trolley system was to be adopted. The Embankment had cost £2,000,000, and was relatively little used. No sensible bus proprietor, running between Westminster and Charing Cross, would think of taking his buses along the Embankment, with its macadamised roadway, when he could go along Parliament Street, with its wood-paving or asphalte, and consequently considerably less friction against the horses. The hon. Member for Marylebone had said that the 1898 scheme was better than the one before the House. But the House rejected that scheme, and since then many important things had happened. The County Council had acquired 48 miles of Tramway in North London, and intended to electrify it as soon as possible, for the present system of horse-traction in London was a scandal and reproach. The Council had also been granted powers to spend £6,000,000 on a new street from Holborn to the Strand, and they desired to link up the northern tramway system to a junction on the Victoria Embankment by a shallow tramway along the line of the new street, which the House had already sanctioned. The constituents of the hon. Member for North Islington would then be able, for a universal penny fare, to get from the Angel to the Embankment, listen to the band on a Summer evening, and return in the same way. It was believed that there would be sufficient passengers between Westminster and Blackfriars alone to make the line yield a profit to the ratepayers, and the Council hoped, as Parliament had sanctioned a shallow tramway from the Embankment to Theobald's Road, to be able to connect the northern tramways with the Embankment, and ultimately, with Parliamentary sanction, to complete the communication between North and South by carrying the lines over Westminster Bridge. The objection raised by the hon. Member for East Marylebone that the present proposal was not as good as that of 1898, in that it did not go over the Bridge, could soon be surmounted. If the hon. Member would withdraw his Instruction, and move another compelling the Council to carry the line over the Bridge, he, on behalf of the Council, would at once accept it. Unless the hon. Member did that, his objection would appear to be entirely based on the old-fashioned view that tramways were a nuisance.

As to the æsthetic objections, he agreed that the Embankment was one of the finest boulevards in the world. But everywhere, along the boulevards of

Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Buda-Pesth, trams could be seen running at reasonable speed on the conduit system. The electric trams of Glasgow had been justly praised. If Glasgow had a road anything like the Thames Embankment, they certainly would have a tramway along it; and the hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division would doubtless have praised them for looking after the ratepayers interests. As to the suggestion of vandalism, was it likely that a body which, since it had had control of the Embankment, had so dealt with it as to earn the encomiums which had been bestowed upon it, would vandalise that thoroughfare unless it was for the popular advantage? The hon. Member for East Marylebone was hardly correct in saying the ratepayers had not been heard on this matter. The proper body, with all respect to Parliament, to determine whether or not there should be a tramway along the Embankment, was the body elected by the ratepayers for that particular purpose. Progressives and Moderates were practically unanimous in favour of the proposal. ["No."] The proof of that statement was to be found in the fact that two of the three names on the back of the Bill were those of Moderates. The Council were willing to defer to public opinion, if the tramway were sanctioned, as to whether the rails should be on each side of the roadway or in the centre. They did not want the Embankment to be occupied solely by people listening to the band, or by their electric tramways. They were willing to cater for the cab and carriage traffic, especially that which obtained between four and six o'clock in the afternoon, when there bowled along that thoroughfare from the city, stockbrokers and merchants, like the hon. Member for Peckham, in smartly-harnessed hansom-cabs, reminding him of Goldsmith's lines in "The Traveller"—

> "Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
> I see the lords of human kind pass by."

After the tramway was constructed, there would still be forty feet left for cabs, motor-cars, bicycles, and so on; and in the interests of rapid communication between North and South, and as an element in the solution of the housing problem, he appealed to the House to reject the proposed Instruction.

Mr. John Burns.

(3.48.) MR. BANBURY said the hon. Member who had just sat down said the Embankment was comparatively little used for heavy traffic, but this was not so, because all the heavy traffic which did not require to stop in the Strand used the Embankment in passing from East to West and West to East. If he thought this tramway would be of any use to anyone, he would not oppose it; but no passengers desired to go along the Embankment to Blackfriars Bridge. The only result of this Bill would be that the traffic over Blackfriars Bridge, which was at the present time very heavy, would be made worse. With the underground railway, and the steamboats in the Summer, there were already ample facilities for travelling along the Embankment. If this tramway was agreed to, it would not be used, and it would entail a great and useless expense upon the ratepayers. The tramways always blocked up the road, and the consequence of this proposal would be that, instead of the light traffic passing along the Victoria Embankment to the different stations, it would be diverted to the Strand and Fleet Street, where blocks and stoppages were already too frequent. Those hon. Members who had supported this scheme had not given any reasons whatever to show why it was wanted, and it would not be of any advantage whatever to the people of South London.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said that he was sorry to find himself at variance with the Member for Peckham upon this question. The argument that this tramway would disfigure the Embankment was not borne out by the experience of similar tramways in other places, and he did not consider that any reason whatever for rejecting this proposal. Because this tramway had been rejected nine times by the House of Commons, that was no reason why hon. Members should continue to reject it. He hoped the House would look at this question in a thoroughly impartial spirit and judge it from the actual facts before the House. The Victoria Embankment was the *hiatus* between the two great metropolitan tramway systems of North and South London. It had been estimated that no less than 476

omnibuses and 5,348 people passed over the three bridges per hour. It was not simply local traffic, but those people dispersed themselves all over London. It was well known that wherever they increased facilities for locomotion they always increased the number of the travelling public. As to the suggested alternative of constructing a subway, the London County Council considered that it would be very much cheaper to construct this tramway, because a subway would cost over £200,000. Upon these grounds he asked the House to consider this proposal in an enlightened spirit and look upon it as a comprehensive scheme for the general locomotion of London which would help to solve the housing problem.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said he should give his hearty support to the Bill. He had given his earnest attention to the development of electric power as applied to the rapid locomotion of the people since his introduction to that house of the "Lancashire Electric Power Bill," which was made a test case upon which the Durham and South Wales Electric Power Bills depended. This Bill being carried through both Houses of Parliament, gave an enormous impetus to all the electric power Bills then before the country and Parliament. He had witnessed the working of tramways in Budapest and other places on the Continent, and was greatly struck with the ease and certainty with which they worked, but still more so, with the grace and beauty of their appearance, especially so in Budapest where most elegant tramcars, without the overhead trolly wires, wheeled all over the city without in the least detracting from the unique charm of the surroundings. We had here, in England, very handsome electric tramcars—in Liverpool, and running from Shepherd's Bush to Ealing and Kew Gardens—so beautifully constructed and comfortably fitted up as to be nothing short of being the paradise of the poor man outside, and the palace of the poor man inside.

*SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said that from what fell from previous speakers, that was only an attempt to get over the bridges by a side wind, and if once made, the argument would be used that it would only be effective by their use. Upon previous occasions this subject had been thoroughly threshed out, and it was stated that the engineer who built Westminster Bridge said it would not be strong enough to take the tramway traffic. At the present time the Victoria Embankment relieved the Strand traffic, but if the greater portion of the Embankment was taken up with this tramway the Strand would again be blocked with traffic. Before agreeing to the Instruction, the House should be assured that the bridges were sufficiently strong to carry the tramway traffic, and a comprehensive scheme should be brought before them.

(4.6.) MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said that those who wished to solve the problem of the housing of the working classes failed to realise that the great object was to take population away from the centres, and not to bring it across the bridges to the middle of the city.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said that he desired to call attention to a curious proceeding on the part of the County Council in this matter. The *locus standi* of the local authority before the Committee had been contested by the County Council. It was a remarkable fact, of which the House, which had passed a Bill to add to the dignity and powers of these local authorities should take note, that the local authority most affected by the proposal before the House should have been opposed by the County Council in its attempt to obtain a *locus standi* before the Committee. He therefore felt compelled to speak on behalf of the local authority of the city of Westminster, which was unanimously against the proposal. He thought one might obtain some light on this curious position of the London County Council and the *locus standi* of Westminster when they remembered that this very proposal of the County Council had generally been defeated by the opposition of the local authorities. On the merits of the case he did not think that any good reason had been shown for this act of vandalism on the Embankment. The County Council had over and over again brought before the House the proposition to run tramways over Westminster

Bridge, and on the last occasion it was defeated by a majority of 119. So, very ingeniously, the County Council turns the process round and begins at the other end. At present the tramways came to the south end of Westminster Bridge, and it was perfectly obvious that the real object of the County Council scheme was to get this tramway along the Embankment to this end of the bridge, in order then to say that it was only reasonable to connect the two points and bring them over the bridge. The hon. Member for Battersea had talked about connecting the North-East and the South-West of London. The real object was to run tramways where there was traffic —to the West End. When they got tramways over Westminster Bridge, the County Council wished to carry them up Northumberland Avenue, through Trafalgar Square, and along Piccadilly, Regent Street, and Victoria Street. He was somewhat surprised at the speech of the hon. Member for Battersea, because he was under the impression that he came down to the House to give up that part of the scheme on behalf of the County Council. He did not know what malign influence had changed his wiser intention. The case had been clearly proved that at present, so far as existing traffic was concerned, there was no demand for the proposed tramways along the Embankment. If the House wanted further proof, he could give it by this illustration. When the proposal to run tramways across Westminster Bridge was rejected in 1898 the County Council adopted what they considered a relief by starting their halfpenny buses.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Oh, no! The hon. Member is entirely mistaken. The buses had been running for many years before the County Council took them over.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS asked the hon. Member whether, in order to serve the traffic which it was now claimed justified the present proposal, these 'buses were run along the Embankment when the County Council took them over.

MR. JOHN BURNS: If the County Council had had power to run a tramway from Westminster to Blackfriars it might have been unnecessary to have halfpenny buses at all.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS thought the House would see that the hon. Member had eluded his question. What he asked was whether the County Council having control of these buses over Westminster bridge, had realised this enormous demand for conveyance along the Embankment, and had turned them to the right and run them towards the City. No. The buses went by Charing Cross, and that was exactly where the County Council wanted to carry the tramways if they got this scheme. The hon. Member for Battersea came down to this House claiming to represent the masses. Was there no place in the economy of their lives for the beauty, quiet, and serenity of a popular boulevard like the Thames Embankment? With the exception of the parks, it was the only fine promenade they had in London. In conclusion, he earnestly hoped that the House would look beneath the surface of this proposal and consider what its real object was and what it would mean to the future of one of the greatest possessions of modern London.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton) said it seemed to him that it would be vandalism to cut up the Embankment with tramways. The hon. Member for Battersea had referred to Berlin and other capitals of Europe, but there was a public boulevard in Paris, which might be compared with the Thames Embankment, namely, the Champs Elysées, where the tramways did not run. Speaking as a country Member, he hoped that hon. Members would vote against this act of vandalism in London. He hoped there were some places still to be preserved in their beauty, and which were not to be exposed to the noise of tramways. Places like the Thames Embankment should be preserved intact, and kept from the spoiler and vulgariser who wished to introduce tramways.

(4.18.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 159; Noes, 178. (Division List No. 123.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther, H. T.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bigwood, James
Blake, Edward
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasg'w
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fr'd Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hammond, John
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John William
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J'hn Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Boulnois and Sir Joseph Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Boland, John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Edwards, Frank
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick

Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Andrew Bonar
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
Macveagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipp'rary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Parker, Gilbert
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Scott, Chas. (Prestwich, Leigh)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Soames, Arthur (Wellesley)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thompson, Dr. E C (Monagh'n N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Young, Samuel
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir John Dickson-Poynder and Mr. Lough.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which were applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. : —

London County Council (Money) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Isle of Wight Central Railway Bill [Lords].

London and South Western Railway Bill [Lords].

Scottish Equitable Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords].

Street Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH.)

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the

case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.—

Military Lands Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time tomorrow.

DUNDEE CORPORATION LIBRARIES ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL.

UNDER SECTION 7, SUB-SECTION (2) OF THE PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Considered; to be read the third time tomorrow.

GREAT CENTRAL AND MIDLAND RAILWAYS (SOUTH YORKSHIRE RAILWAYS) BILL.

Ordered, that the Minutes of Evidence on the Shireoaks, Laughton and Maltby Railway Bill of session 1901 be referred to the Committee on the Great Central and Midland Railways (South Yorkshire Railways) Bill of this session.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

RAILWAYS BILLS (GROUP 6).

Sir SAMUEL HOARE reported from the Committee on Group 6 of Railway Bills, that the parties promoting the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways Bill had stated that the evidence of Thomas M. Greer, solicitor to the County Council of Antrim, Ballymoney, Antrim, was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Thomas M. Greer do attend the said Committee tomorrow at half-past eleven of the clock.

Ordered, that Thomas M. Greer do attend the Committee on Group 6 of Railway Bills tomorrow at half-past eleven of the clock.

BELFAST CORPORATION BILL.

Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Amendments to—

Central Argentine and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to extend the time limited by the by the Swansea Corporation Water Act, 1892, for the construction of the works authorised by that Act; and to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Swansea in regard to their water undertaking; and for other purposes." [Swansea Corporation] Water Bill [Lords.]

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporations of Ashton-under-Lyne and Dukinfield to acquire the Alma Bridge and the approaches thereto; to confer further powers upon the Corporation of Ashton-under-Lyne in regard to their tramway and electric lighting undertakings; and for other purposes." [Ashton-under-Lyne and Dukinfield Corporations (Alma Bridge, etc.) Bill [Lords].

SWANSEA CORPORATION WATER BILL [LORDS],

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE AND DUKINFIELD CORPORATIONS (ALMA BRIDGE, ETC.) BILL [LORDS],

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

FRESHWATER FISH (SCOTLAND) ACT.

Petitions in favour: From Scottish Trout Anglers' Association and Dundee; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES AND RATING BILL.

Petition from Partick, against; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Partick, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Mytholmroyd, Sunderland, Bedford, Stamford, Hebden Bridge (two), and Crimsworth; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Ealing, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL

Petition from Carluke, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petitions against: From Easington, Bedwellty, Nantyglo and Blaina, and Brendon and Byshottles; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition against establishment: From Brechin and Arbroath; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Coventry, Mansfield, Buxton, Hebden Br dge, and Sheffield (two); to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MORAY FIRTH FOREIGN TRAWLERS.

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 10th April; *Mr. Weir*]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITARY WORKS).

Copy presented of Approximate Estimate of Expenditure under The Barracks Act, 1890, and Military Works Acts, 1897, 1899, and 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented of Statistics of the Refugee Camps in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR CONFERENCE AT BRUSSELS.

Copy presented of Correspondence relating to the Sugar Conference at Brussels, 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR CONFERENCE AT BRUSSELS (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 5, 1902).

Copy presented of Correspondence relating to the Brussels Sugar Bounty Conference [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Copy presented of Return for the quarter ended 31st March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 18th March; *Mr. Archdale*]; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC SUPPLY UNDERTAKINGS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered, "relating to authorised Electricity Supply Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Local Authorities for the year 1900, in the following form—

1	2	3	4		5	6		7	8		9		10	11		12		13		14		15		16	
Name of Local Authority.	Date of Act of Parliament or Provisional Order.	Area of supply.	Loans		Total capital expended at end of year.	Receipts during year.		Expenditure on maintenance, &c., during year.	Gross Profit or loss before providing for interest, sinking fund, &c.		Percentage of gross profit or loss on total capital expenditure.		Interest on loans	Profit after deducting expenditure on maintenance and interest on loans.		Sinking fund.		Reserve fund.		Net profit or loss after providing for interest, sinking fund, &c.		Price per Board of Trade unit.		Quantity of energy generated and sold.	
			Amount authorised.	Amount borrowed.	Amount repaid.	Public Lighting.	Sale of energy, and other receipts.		Profit.	Loss.	Profit	Loss.		Profit.	Loss.	(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year, excluding amount of loans repaid.	(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year.	Profit.	Loss.	Maximum authorised.	Charged.	Units generated.	Units sold.

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 344, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Bartley*).

ELECTRIC SUPPLY UNDERTAKINGS (COMPANIES).

Return ordered, "relating to authorised Electricity Supply Undertakings in the United Kingdom belonging to Companies for the year 1900, in the following form—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11		12		13		14		15		16
Name of Company.	Date of Act of Parliament or Provisional Order.	Area of supply.	Total capital authorised at end of year.	Total capital called up at end of year.	Total borrowing powers.	Total loan capital borrowed at end of year.	Total capital expended at end of year.	Receipts during year.		Expenditure on maintenance, &c., during year.	Reserve Fund.		Depreciation fund.		Net Profit or loss for year.		Price per Board of Trade unit.		Quantity of energy generated and sold.		Dividend paid on ordinary shares.
								Public Lighting.	Sale of energy, and other receipts.		(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year.	(1) Provided during year; (2) Interest.	Total at end of year.	Profit.	Loss.	Maximum authorised.	Charged.	Units generated.	Units sold.	

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 343, of Session 1901)." — (*Mr. Bartley*).

SOUTH AFRICA (TRANSPORTS).

Return ordered, "showing the name, tonnage, and speed of each vessel employed to convey troops to South Africa, since the 1st day of April, 1901, and up to and ending 31st day of March, 1902, the date and port of her departure from these shores, and arrival at Cape Town, Durban, or elsewhere respectively, including arrival at and departure from intermediate port of call; the number of troops and horses or mules carried on each occasion, the number of horses or mules lost on voyage, vessels provided with new pattern fittings, vessels provided with old pattern fittings, vessels provided with slings for each horse or mule, vessels not so provided; and the time occupied by each vessel in making the voyage, in the following form—

Name of vessel.	Tonnage.	Speed.	Date of departure and port.		Date of arrival and departure from intermediate ports.			Date of arrival and port.		Time occupied on voyage.	Number of troops carried.	Number of horses or mules carried.	Number of horses or mules lost on voyage.	Whether provided with new pattern or old pattern fittings.	Whether provided with slings for each horse or mule.
			Port.	Departure.	Port.	Arrival.	Departure.	Cape Town.	Durban.						

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 374, of Session 1901)."—(*Sir John Colomb.*)

(4.35.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can inform the House as to the conditions of peace offered to the Boer leaders at the Conference held in Pretoria.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have nothing to add to the information which I gave the House on Friday last on the subject.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: But if the Boer commandoes are informed of the conditions of peace, why cannot the information be given to this House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not accept the statement of the hon. Gentleman.

Purchase of Boer Farms by the Government.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware

that a farm at Stoijesfontein, adjoining Kroonstad Commonage, in the Orange River Colony, and comprising 8,000 morgen, was put up for sale by auction in March; and whether this farm was bought by the Government for £15,000.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The farm Strydfontein was sold by public auction by the executors of the late David Daniel Malen on behalf of the estate and bought by Government for £15,000, which sum represents its fair average value.

Spion Kop Despatches.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why the Government, having refused to publish further despatches relating to the Natal campaign, have now thought it right to lay upon the Table the previously unpublished despatches relating to Spion Kop; and whether he will state what specific purpose is served by publishing the despatch circulated on 17th April entitled the Spion Kop Despatch.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the publication of the Spion Kop despatches, the Government will withdraw their prohibition to Sir Redvers Buller to publish the communications which passed between him and Sir George White by heliograph and otherwise during the seige of Ladysmith.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Spion Kop despatches were published in full because the omissions in them had become the subject of controversy in the course of which Sir Redvers Buller, who had been in chief oommand, expressed a hope—

"That if any further publication is intended, my words may be published as written and without manipulation, and that the opportunity will be taken to correct in this respect previous publication."

The Government do not feel it incumbent on them, in consequence of the publication, to publish further Papers relating to the operations in Natal prior to the relief of Ladysmith. The hon. Member for South Donegal has, so far as they are aware, no title to represent Sir Redvers Buller in the matter. Nor have they received any demand from Sir Redvers Buller for the publication of any telegram, nor will they permit any telegrams to be published except by His Majesty's Government.

MR. MALCOLM: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the case that the publication of these despatches has given far more gratification to the enemies than to the friends of this country.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale); May I ask whether it is in accordance with military procedure that an officer should be secretly criticised without his knowledge, and that those adverse criticisms should be made public without any opportunity being offered to him to refute them?

*MR. SPEAKER; Order, order! That is a matter of argument.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): In the event of Sir Charles Warren making an application in the same way as Sir Redvers Buller has done——

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise out of the Question. The hon. Member must put a Question on the Paper.

MR. PIRIE: I will put a Question down, Sir.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I wish to put one Question to the right hon. Gentleman. Has Sir Redvers Buller asked permission to publish the heliograph communication from himself to Sir George White in reference to Ladysmith?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Oh! Yes, Sir. My Question on the Paper refers to it.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of any further ueston

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state on what grounds were the portions of the Spion Kop despatches published in the Gazette of 17th April, 1900, without lacunæ or asterisks to show that passages had been eliminated, and without any indication that the documents were placed before the public in fragments and not in their entirety; and whether, in future, the War Office, when issuing despatches in an incomplete form, will see that blanks are left for the passages which have been suppressed.

MR. BRODRICK: It is never usual when portions of despatches are not published to indicate the eliminated passages by asterisks. The reply to the second paragraph is in the negative.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in the eliminated despatch of Lord Roberts paragraph 3 is paragraph 4 in the real despatch? Is this right, having regard to the good faith between the public and the War Office?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir Charles Warren.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state why the statement which Sir Charles Warren laid before the Commander-in-Chief when he was withdrawn from his command in Natal, has not been included in the Spion Kop Papers; and what explanation (if any) has the War Office to offer for withholding this document from publication.

MR. BRODRICK: This statement did not form part of the despatches and has not, therefore, been published. Sir Charles Warren's Report was written on 27th January, 1900, and the statement alluded to in the Question was dated 6th August, 1900, many months after Sir Charles Warren had left Natal. It is obvious from the published despatches that a grave d fference of opinion existed between Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Charles Warren, the two senior officers responsible at Spion Kop, and Lord Roberts in reviewing the whole action distributed criticism impartially between the two. His Majesty's Government, having published the despatches as forwarded to them at the time, are not prepared to publish further statements from either of the officers involved, impugning each others conduct or justifying their own share in these operations.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER asked whether the statement in question did not controvert General Buller's adverse crisicisms; and whether it did not throw added light on the matter.

MR. BRODRICK: I am not prepared to say what was the nature of the statement laid before the Commander-in-Chief by Sir Charles Warren; but it would be impossible, in regard to military despatches, to allow officers who may consider their conduct to be impugned to retaliate by entering into recrimination with those who have made the Reports of which they complain.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER: Why were the despatches of General Buller published?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter of argument.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will Sir Charles Warren be allowed to publish the documents to which he refers in *The Times* today?

MR. BRODRICK: No, he will not be permitted to publish Papers relating to officers engaged in any of the operations.

Volunteer Active Service Companies—Honorary Rank for Officers.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that in the Army List for April it does not appear that the officers of the Active Service Companies of Volunteers, attached to regular battalions in the field, have been granted the honorary rank in the Army accorded to those who served with the City Imperial Volunteers and the Im perial Yeomanry in South Africa; and whether he will provide that this honorary rank be now granted to these officers, as promised on more than one occasion.

LORD STANLEY: The list of officers to be granted honorary rank is being prepared, and it hoped that they will shortly be gazetted.

Army Contracts—Tinned Meats.

MR. MALCOLM: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will inform the House why so few contracts to supply the Army in South Africa with canned meats are now held by merchants in Canada; whether his official information shows that dissatisfaction exists with the execution of previous canned meat contracts by those Canadians who have held them; and whether American firms have obtained the majority of such contracts owing to the fact that their tenders were lower or because their provisions were of better quality.

LORD STANLEY: The whole question of the comparative merits of the various tinned meats is now under consideration, and I am not therefore prepared to give any answer at present on this subject.

Remounts—Colonial Depôts.

MR. MALCOLM: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state in how many colonies or dependencies of the Empire there exist horse-breeding establishments, or depôts under Government supervision, to supply the Army of the Empire with remounts; and whether, in the light of recent events, it is proposed to increase the number of such stations.

LORD STANLEY: There are no such depôts. The whole question as to the best way of providing remounts in the future is under consideration, and this particular point will be dealt with among others.

Government Employees and Vaccination.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been directed to a notice issued on Wednesday last to the workmen employed at the West India Docks Naval Store Depôt, to the effect that unless they subject themselves to re-vaccination they will be discharged on Saturday week; and seeing that a number of these men are only temporarily employed by the Government and consequently not entitled to compensation, whether in the event of vaccination incapacitating them for work, he will consider the advisability of granting compensation to such men as comply with the order.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): No such notice as that referred to by the hon. Member has been issued. The men referred to in the Question, who are in the temporary employment of the Government only, were informed that it was desirable they should take advantage of the gratuitous vaccination which was offered, and over seventy of them have done so. The Admiralty cannot undertake to grant compensation to such of the men as may be incapacitated through taking this necessary precaution, but permission has been given to place any men who are disabled, on light work as far as possible, so that they may not lose pay.

H.M.S. "Diadem"—Steaming Records.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state what was the total number of miles steamed by H.M.S. "Diadem," *in toto*, and the number she went at her maximum designed speed at any one period, stating the dates of same.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The "Diadem" has steamed 53,085 knots during the period referred to, but this does not include distances steamed during manœuvres and gun practice. The ship ran 164 knots at her maximum designed speed on the 26th January, 1898, and 143 knots on the 9th December, 1898.

H.M.S. "Discovery."

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the "Discovery" has been taken out of the sale list at Portsmouth; if so, whether this is for the purpose of being fitted out to convey certain persons to the Naval Review; and will he state who these persons are, and what is the estimated cost of the refitting.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member has been misinformed. The "Discovery" has not been taken out of the sale list, and it is not proposed to utilise her in connection with the Naval Review.

Naval Victualling.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the Government are about to effect a considerable reform both in the victualling and meal hours of the Fleet, in accordance with the recommendations of Admiral Rice's Victualling Committee, involving in the former connection a yearly additional expenditure of £180,000, he will give a full opportunity, on Navy Estimates, for Vote 2, the Victualling Vote, to be discussed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: At the present moment I can give no pledge as to when this Vote will be brought forward.

Director General of Education for India.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state what is the salary attached to the newly created office of Director General of Education for India, and why this appointment has been filled up from the Education Department of this country instead of from among the many competent chiefs of the Education Department of India.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The salary attached to the newly created office of Director of Education is 2,000 rupees a month. The appointment was, at the request of the Government of India, filled up by selection in this country because it appeared to them, as it did also to me, that an officer possessing the special qualifications required for the post was most likely to be secured by the adoption of this course.

In answer to a further Question by MR. CAINE,

*LORD G. HAMILTON said an officer with special qualifications was required because of the generally unsatisfactory condition of the organisation of education in India at present.

Burmese Opium Trade.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the Government of Burma has, in taking over the monopoly sale of opium for that province, made arrangements for the retail sale of cooked opium, specially prepared for smoking purposes.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Some modifications in the regulations for the licensed sale of opium in Burma have been recently introduced, but I have no information of any such arrangements as the hon. Member refers to.

MR. CAINE: Will the noble Lord lay on the Table the Papers?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no objection to laying some Papers generally, but I have no information, as I have said, on the particular point raised by the hon. Member's Question.

The Berars.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a settlement of the claim of the Hyderabad State to the Berars has been arrived at; and, if so, will he state the terms of the settlement, and place the Papers relating thereto upon the Table of the House.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have reason to believe that the question of the Berars has been under discussion between the Government of India and that of Hyderabad, but I am not in a position to make any statement on the subject.

Uganda Railway.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the total amount of money expended on the Uganda Railway up to 31st March in this year.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The total amount of money expended on the Uganda Railway up to the 31st

ultimo was £4,982,468 3s. 2d. of which £4,907,239 19s. 4d. was from the Imperial Grant, and the balance from receipts, from traffic accounts, and a few other small miscellaneous receipts.

Tripoli.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government is aware that an agreement has been come to between the Governments of France and Italy recognising Tripoli as a sphere of Italian influence with a view to its annexation at the first convenient moment, and also that Signor Prinetti, the Italian Foreign Minister, has recently declared in the Italian Chamber that the Italian Government was making military preparation with a view to operations in Tripoli; whether it is the policy of His Majesty's Government to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, and whether orders will be issued to the British Fleet to prevent any occupation of the territory of Tripoli by the forces of any other Power; and whether His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome will be instructed to furnish His Majesty's Government with a translation of Signor Prinetti's speech delivered within the last few days on the question of Tripoli.

LORD CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government are aware of no such agreement and no such declaration has been made in the Italian Chamber. The policy of His Majesty's Government is correctly described as having for its object the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, and it appears from a translation of Signor Prinetti's speech, forwarded by His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome, that the action of the Italian Government will be also directed against any change in the present circumstances of Tripoli.

Budget Proposals—Corn and Flour Duty.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the intention of the Resolution is to include under the word "flour" such articles of sago flour, mandioca flour, dextrine and tapioca flour, all of which articles are unfit for human food, and are used exclusively in the manufacture of fine goods for sizing purposes and for the purposes of commercial gum making.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The articles specified in the Question are liable to duy under the Budget Resolution of the 14th–15th instant. I am not aware that sago and tapioca flour, for example, are unfit for human food.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool Exchange): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, under Clause 10 of the Finance Act, 1901, buyers of flour from corn-millers under contract will pay the duty on the corn from which the flour has been milled in addition to the contract price; and, if so, whether it is intended to take power to remit the amount of such duty to the buyer on flour exported by him to foreign receivers in pursuance of a contract made prior to the imposition of the duty.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No general answer can be given to the first Question; the answer would, in the case of each contract, depend upon the circumstances. The answer to the second Question is in the negative. There was no such remission in the case of sugar.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension. My Question referred to a simple contract.

MR. M. HICKS BEACH: It is not for me to interpret the law. Section 10 of the Finance Act of 1901 governs cases of this kind. It is impossible for me to say whether any particular case or whether cases generally come under it. It is for those interested in the matter to take the opinion of their legal advisers.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: I will ask the Attorney-General a Question tomorrow.

Canada and the New Corn and Flour Duties.

*MR. PARKER (Gravesend); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any official representations have been received with reference to the feeling

in Canada or any of the Colonies in connection with the proposed duties on corn and flour; and if, in that event, any such communications will be placed upon the Table.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have received a letter on the subject from Lord Strathcona, acting no doubt on instructions from the Dominium Government, but I have no Papers that can be laid upon the Table.

Coronation Medals.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state when the Coronation medals to be struck for sale to the public will be ready, from whom they will be procurable, and what will be the cost of the different kinds.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is proposed to commence the issue of Coronation medals to the public immediately after the ceremony has taken place Exact particulars will be given through the Press as to the mode of procuring them and their cost, but applications have so far been registered at the Royal Mint, where the medals will be struck. Generally speaking, the precedent of the Jubilee medals of 1897 will be followed both as to sizes and prices—that is to say, there will be two sizes, and prices will range from £13 for the large gold to 1s. for the small silver.

MR. NORMAN: Is it not possible to issue these medals before the Coronation, in view of the fact that many of them are to be distributed as school prizes?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I will consider that, but I do not think they ought to be issued before the Coronation.

Pupil Teachers.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can give a Return of the number of pupil teachers and probationers attending pupil teachers' centres, showing how many such pupil teachers and probationers are actually on the staff of elementary schools.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): No, Sir. It is impossible to discover from the records of the Board of Education how many of the persons who are called pupil teachers and probationers in pupil teachers' centres are actually employed in public elementary schools; but it appears that a good many are not even nominally on the staff of any public elementary school.

MR. FLOWER: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can give a Return showing how many pupils trained in pupil teachers' centres drop the profession immediately after leaving the centre, and after one year's service.

SIR J. GORST: No. There are no records kept by which the number of teachers trained at the public expense who do not remain in the profession can be ascertained.

Fines in the Glasgow Post Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a decision was recently given whereby five officers employed in the Glasgow Post Office were each fined 6d. for failing to observe that a registered letter had not been blue-lined at the office of origin, although previously to this decision it was customary to divide the fine of 6d. equally among the officers at fault; and, seeing that the reason given was that the amount, 6d., could not be equally divided amongst the five officers, whether the Postmaster General will consent to a reconsideration of the matter and revert to the old system of dividing the fine equally amongst the officers at fault.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The officers in question were rightly fined 6d. each for the irregular treatment of a registered letter as described, in accordance with the general rule regulating the imposition of fines. The system previously in force at Glasgow of imposing a total fine of 6d. for such an irregularity, irrespective of the number of officers involved, was not in accordance with the general rule and has therefore been abandoned; but the

Surveyor always has the power of mitigating the fine in individual cases when circumstances justify it.

Sorters—Sunday Work.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he can state the date when the Civil Service Commissioners first intimated to candidates for sorterships in the London Postal Service that compulsory Sunday duty would be one of the conditions of service.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The notice containing the intimation that sorters are called upon to perform Sunday work as required, was first issued to candidates by the Civil Service Commissioners in connection with the Competition which took place in June, 1900, but since May, 1898, candidates have been informed before taking up their appointments that they were liable to perform such duty when required.

Postal Servants and Outside Employment.

MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a regulation is in force forbidding an employee of the Post Office from acting as treasurer to a slate club; and, if so, whether he can see his way to rescind it.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Under the regulations of the Post Office no servant of the Department is allowed to undertake, either as agent or principal, a business connected with a Building, Provident, or Friendly Society which involves or admits of the receipt of money on deposit. The Postmaster General is not aware of any case in which this prohibition has been held to apply to the treasurership of a slate club; but if the hon. Member is aware of any such case, and will be good enough to furnish particulars, inquiry shall be made.

North Sea Fisheries.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if the Government will endeavour, by arrangement with North Sea Powers, to close absolutely against trawlers such waters as may be agreed on as International breeding grounds.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I understand that the point as to whether or not certain areas on the North Sea should be closed against trawlers will certainly be examined into by the International Commission at Copenhagen.

Scottish Local Authorities and the Coronation.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether in respect of reasonable expenditure out of public funds for the celebration of the Coronation, the Government intend to take any steps to give local authorities in Scotland similiar powers and facilities to those which are to be given in England; and, if so, what powers will be given, and to what local authorities.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: No, Sir, the Secretary for Scotland cannot undertake to propose legislation on the subject.

Railway Crossing Gates.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state who is bound to look after gates at a railway crossing, over which a number of persons have a right of way into their lands from the public road, and over which gates the railway company have appointed no gatekeeper.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I cannot undertake to give a legal opinion in reply to this Question, but I may refer the hon. Member to Section 75 of the Railway Clauses Act, 1845.

Trinity and Irish Lights Boards.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is intended to make a general inquiry into the question of lighthouses and lights situated around the three kingdoms, as administered by the Trinity and Irish Lights Boards; and, if so, whether such inquiry will extend to the necessity of providing representatives of the shipping interest upon those Boards.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The reply to the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

Butter Standard.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, seeing that the evidence of the Butter Standard Committee has been published for some time, he can now fix a standard for butter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): Regulations will at once be issued under Section 4 of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1899, declaring that the presence of more than 16 per cent. of water in any sample of butter shall raise a presumption that the butter is not genuine. The regulations will come into force on the 15th May.

Meat Imports.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to a resolution, passed on Thursday, by a large majority of the London Butchers' Trade Society that in order to relieve the short supply of meat and prevent a considerable rise in price, the restrictions on the importation of store cattle from Canada should be removed; and whether his Majesty's Government will take into consideration the hardship on meat consumers of an increased price of meat, and repeal the Diseases of Animals Act, 1896.

MR. HANBURY: The statement made with regard to the short supply of meat is apparently based on the fact that the imports of cattle and of fresh beef have been somewhat less during the first three months of the present year than in the corresponding period of 1901, but I know of no reason why it should be assumed that this shortage of supply is of a permanent character, or that a considerable rise in price is likely to ensue. In any case, however, the repeal of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1896, and the admission of store cattle from Canada would afford no remedy. Since that Act was passed the imports of fat cattle from Canada for immediate slaughter have been practically as large as the imports of both fat and store cattle prior to 1896, and there has been no decline during the past three months in Canadian imports.

Technical Instruction in Ireland.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland issued in June, 1900, suggestions for the guidance of local authorities in the preparation of schemes, and in December, 1900, a memorandum as to the powers and procedure of local authorities under the Technical Instruction Acts of 1889 and 1891, and The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, and that in these documents the Department state that rates struck for technical instruction under the Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891, would carry, in addition to the grants under the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, a grant equivalent to the amount of the rate under the Acts of 1889 and 1891; and, seeing that the Galway County Council, who struck rates which produced £773, have been informed that only £407 will be payable, and that the continuance of even this grant is not guaranteed for more than three years, and having regard to the assurance given and to the documents referred to, the Government will arrange that the full amount of the equivalent grant under the Acts of 1889 and 1891 will be made available for technical instruction in the County of Galway so long as the County Council contributes a like amount.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have called for a Report from the Department on this question, but as I have not yet received it, I will ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question tomorrow.

Crime in Cork.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the opening of the Cork Borough Sessions on the 16th instant; is he aware

that the Recorder congratulated the Grand Jury on having so little to do at the sessions, said that the cases were few in number and light in character, and that he had little to do in the matter of Crown law in the city of Cork; and whether, under these circumstances, he can state what reasons the Executive Government put forward for extending the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act to the city of Cork.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reasons for the application to parts of Ireland of certain of the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act were explained by me at some length on Thursday last in this House. To the statement I made on that occasion I have nothing to add. I may, however, correct one error. The city of Cork has not been proclaimed under Section 2.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that at the recent assizes in Cork the judges complimented the Grand Jury on the utter absence of crime from both the city and county?

MR. WYNDHAM: I dealt with that point in my speech last Thursday.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Then are we to understand that it does not matter what the condition of the county may be in regard to crime——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Irish Prison Rules.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state when the new Irish Prison rules will be circulated.

MR. WYNDHAM: On Thursday or Friday next, I understand.

Boycotting at Enniskillen.

MR. M'GOVERN (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many persons are or have been boycotted and intimidated in the rural district of Enniskillen No. 2, in the county of Cavan, which has been proclaimed under The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, since the 1st January, 1902, and will he say in what townlands these people reside.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must decline for obvious reasons to identify in the manner suggested any person who is, or has been, subjected to intimidation. An extra force of police was drafted into the rural district for the protection of a family exposed to intimidation. Persons in the district have also been advised to resist the collection of rent by force.

MR. M'GOVERN: What is to prevent the right hon. Gentleman taking legal proceedings if there are any cases of boycotting?

[No answer was returned.]

University Education in Ireland—Report of Royal Commission.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state when the final Report of the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland may be expected.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that it is not possible at present to give the information desired by the hon. Gentleman, as the Commission has not yet concluded its sittings.

Legal Decisions Affecting Trade Unions.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, considering the extreme importance of recent decisions in the House of Lords affecting the position of trade unions, and the failure hitherto of those interested in bringing on this subject for discussion, the Government will, in arranging business, endeavour to safeguard for this purpose Tuesday, the 13th May, upon which day the Motion on this Question of the hon. Member for the Hexham Division has at present the first place.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can make no special exemptions in favour of particular Motions, however great and however legitimate might be the interest they evoke; but I can hardly doubt that the

block of new Rules which we are considering will be in operation by May 13th; and the Motion which has first place on the Tuesday will then have first place on the Wednesday evening sitting reserved for private Members.

MR. BRYCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman contrive so that the Motion shall not lose its place?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It will be fair both as regards Tuesdays and Wednesdays, when we alter the day, that no prejudice should be suffered by Motions or Bills by the alteration.

Education Bill.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will state when he proposes to take the Second Reading of the Education Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can give no absolute or conclusive pledge, but as at present advised we shall take the Second Reading of the Bill on 5th May.

Business of the House.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Leader of the House what business will be taken on Thursday and Friday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that the time has come when we ought to make a determined effort to secure progress with the Rules, and I propose to take them on Thursday and Friday this week and on Monday and Tuesday next week. It may be for the convenience of the House now if I give notice that, in order, without difficulty, to fulfil the arrangement generally arrived at a few days ago, I intend to move the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule tomorrow. I do not think this need be taken to indicate that there will be a sitting after twelve, but it is quite clear under the arrangement that, if the Finance Bill is to be introduced tomorrow, it would be better to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule.

NEW BILL.

GROCERS' LICENCES (SCOTLAND) BILL,

"To abolish Dealers' or Grocers' Licences in Scotland," presented by Sir John Leng, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Pirie, and Mr. Hunter Craig; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

INCOME TAX.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That income tax shall be charged for the year beginning the 6th day of April, 1902, at the rate of 1s. 3d."

*(5.0.) MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): As I understand it, there is a general arrangement by which the discussion on the corn and flour duty is to be taken tomorrow, while today's debate is to range over the remaining features of the Budget, although the income tax is only mentioned in the Question put from the Chair. It seems to me that the Estimates for the year were unfairly and unduly swelled by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the last moment. When we came here on Budget night, we expected that provision would have to be made for £170,000,000 or £174,000,000, and the Estimates for that huge amount had been closely examined by the House. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer astonished everybody by suddenly increasing them by £18,500,000. The Leader of the Opposition had suggested to the right hon. Gentleman whether, under the circumstances that certain negotiations were going on, he might not defer making provision for the war for a short time. That was wise advice which might well have been taken, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer declined to accept the hint, and added £18,500,000 to the already great Estimate which the House was asked to pass, in order to provide for the service of the year. I want to enter a protest against the bad system which is growing up in this House in regard to the expenditure of the country—the system of which this is a flagrant instance—of not giving sufficient explanations of the demands made on the taxpayers. In asking for this extra £18,500,000 the Chancellor of the Exchequer accounted only for the

sum of about £2,000,000, and a portion of that affected a matter which might well have been left over till another time. I wish to make the strongest protest in my power against any further grant to the West Indies, but that is a subject which we shall have before us on another occasion. We have already had to find money for these grants, and I do not think that another should have been suddenly sprung upon us in this Budget.

We complain of the lack of information as to what this £18,500,000 is required for, and our protest should be such as to induce the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be more careful in future about springing Estimates upon the House at the last moment. What was the reason given? We were told that provision must be made for gratuities to the troops, and for the expense of bringing them home. Surely the right hon. Gentleman might have waited to see whether the ample provision of £40,000,000 already made for the war would not enable him to meet the additional requirements. Then we have reason to complain, I think, of the mode in which the deficit of £45,000,000 is dealt with. First, £4,500,000 is abstracted from the Sinking Fund, £5,000,000 is to be raised by new taxation, £3,500,000 is to be obtained from the Exchequer Balances and £32,000,000 by loan. The Chancellor of the Exchequer when he told the House that he proposed to borrow £32,000,000 promised to explain the form of the proposed loan later on, but as a matter of fact he simply had a Resolution read at the Table and no explanation was given at all. The loan had been discussed in the Press and on the market, but we were told nothing about the details. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he might later on have to ask the Committee for further borrowing powers—by Treasury Bills—or a short loan to the extent of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000. I should like to have some further particulars on that point. Is he proposing, in fact, to borrow £47,000,000 instead of £32,000,000? What kind of loan is it to be? We ought surely to have a full opportunity of examining it. I do not think that the country has been fairly treated in this matter. We have read in the papers that the loan has been a gigantic success—possibly too great a success. There has been a great rush for it, and I feel that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well have proceeded more slowly, for then he might have got a better price than he did. Had he secured only one 1 per cent. more it would have made a difference of £320,000. In my opinion, however, as much as 2 per cent. has been thrown away. The loan was issued at £93 10s., and this marks a great fall in the price of consols. This is the third loan and each has been lower than the other. The first was £98 10s., the second £94 10s., and now the third has fallen to £93 10s. If the price had been higher the public generally might have taken it up, but the right hon. Gentleman prefers to make a private arrangement to place £16,000,000 before the remaining moiety is offered to the public.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Loan Bill is not before the House, and therefore it is not in order to discuss the details of the loan; although it is in order to discuss the policy of raising the loan.

*MR. LOUGH: As I understand we shall have another opportunity of raising this question, I will not further press the point. Now I come to the amount which is to be raised by new taxation. The right hon. Gentleman complains that objection has been taken to every tax proposed except the income tax, I say that too much has been borrowed, and more ought to be raised by taxation, I think 2d. or 4d. more might well have been added to the income tax. By putting it up to 1s. 6d., £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 might have been raised. This war has cost three times as much as the Crimean War, and yet in that war the income tax went up to 1s. 4d. The income tax affords the best and safest way of raising money. It is a most fair tax, based on profits, and it falls where the money is. It would have been better to raise it than to resort to indirect taxation or to put a new tax on bread. I do not believe in widening the basis of taxation because it involves a great interference with trade. I do not regret anything

I said by way of protest against the tax on sugar, but I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well drop the argument that the public will have to pay no more for bread or sugar in consequence of the imposition of these duties. No matter how cheap an article is, if a tax is put upon it the consumer has to pay it in the long run. I think two of the taxes proposed by the right hon. Gentleman are about the worst that have ever been proposed in this House—I refer to the corn and flour duty and the stamp tax.

I do not suppose the right hon. Gentleman will object to our discussing his proposal to double the cheque stamp duty, for it is well that he should be made familiar with the opposition which is arising in every part of the country to his proposal, which requires a great deal more examination at the hands of the House than it has as yet received. I think the right hon. Gentleman has forgotten the principle which underlies this duty; that principle is the power of the penny as a commercial medium. We have many examples of the great results that have been produced in this country by recognising this force. The most extraordinary, perhaps, is the Penny Postage, established sixty years ago. Why does not the Chancellor propose doubling this? Simply because he must realise that there would be no certainty of extra revenue, and the greatest National inconvenience and dislocation would be suffered. Omnibus, railway and train companies have all realised the great advantage of the use of the penny, and so the country has derived great advantage from it. No manager of such a company would think of increasing his revenue or promoting its prosperity by altering his standard price of one penny. Exactly the same principle applies to the penny charged for a cheque. The Chancellor of the Exchequer estimates that he obtains £800,000 annually, increasing at the rate of about £50,000 a year from this source. I had the pleasure of speaking to a man today who pays 25 per cent. of that revenue. He is the printer of the cheques for all the great banks, and he told me that his customers are unanimous in their opposition to this increase of the stamp duty. They are agreed that it will not produce a larger revenue. Two hundred million cheques are put into circulation every year, and they save the circulation of a vast amount of money. They are an immense convenience to business men and that is a matter which the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not lightly endanger. I mentioned the fact the other day that for a period of seven or eight months yearly over 1,800 cheques were issued by a Co-operative Society, with which I am acquainted. Each of these being drawn for £2, paid 1d. to the Exchequer, the total income from this source alone being £80 or £90 yearly. What would be the result of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal to double the duty? Why, only one cheque would be drawn monthly—the money would be paid out in cash and this revenue would be sacrificed. There is another point to be borne in mind in connection with this matter. On the average a month or six weeks elapses before the cheques are paid back, for the poor people who get them have no banking account, and they keep the cheque as long as possible, knowing how apt money is to melt away when it reaches their pockets. Eventually they pay it to a tradesman; he pays it into his bank, and so the whole transaction goes through without any cash passing at all. Not only, then, is a great commercial facility enjoyed by all these people, but an inducement is given to economy, there is greater safety than if all the payments were made in cash. This system obtains in every rank of life and would be disturbed. I know of the case of a lady who has an income of £600 a year. She draws annually 700 cheques, thus paying the Chancellor of the Exchequer £3. If the duty is increased she will only draw about 250 cheques yearly, and here again there will be a loss to the revenue. The proposed change will also have a very prejudicial effect on small shopkeepers, whose accounts are now paid by cheque remitted by post. These cheques will not be so freely used in the future; the customer will wait till he happens to pass the shop, when he can pay the amount in cash. Thus, the tradesman will be kept longer out of his money, and in some cases may lose it altogether.

Again, there will be loss on the postage of the cheques.

The greatest consideration of all, however, is the difference that will be made to the cash reserve of the country and the need that will arise for a great increase in the amount of bullion in circulation. The cash reserve of the country greatly depends on this system of paper money which has grown up under the cheque system. Our cash reserve is placed at £35,000,000, whereas in France it is £100,000,000; and France requires this larger cash reserve, because in that country the cheque system has not been adopted to any large extent. I only wish to touch on one other point. The right hon. Gentleman has very kindly said that he will receive representations on this matter. I attended today a most influential meeting, where there was perfect unanimity in protesting against this proposal. The right hon. Gentleman has indicated that he is willing to make some concession in regard to this matter. But he has suggested that the difficulties will be met if he allows the penny cheque to be used for small amounts and leaves the twopence on larger cheques, but I appeal to him not to make up his mind in that direction. He certainly would not improve matters by providing that the increased duty should only be payable on cheques above a certain amount. If he draws the line at £20, or even £100, he will get nothing out of the increased duty, for there is sure to be a decrease in the number of the cheques. I advise him to take a broader and more generous view of this matter. He must have been advised by some one like those professors to whom the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes made allusion in his will, who have not much experience of business in making this suggestion. The revenue from cheques will not be increased by any such plan. Any disturbance of the duty will mean a great dislocation of business and cause inconvenience in every class of society. He has made a splendid income out of cheques in the past, that income is improving day by day, and I hope he will not tamper with it.

(5.30.) SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): I much regret I am unable to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Budget as a whole. Of course we all expected additional taxation, and no doubt a fresh area of taxation was necessary to secure the money, but I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman's selection has been very unfortunate. I have always been a very loyal supporter of the Unionist Party, whether in or out of office, and I have hitherto had no strain put upon my loyalty in supporting their policy. Their legislation has been progressive, but I confess the present Budget does seriously strain it. I have frequently been accused by my opponents of supporting retrograde legislation, but when challenged to name any measure which could be so designated, the only one they ventured to quote was the Agricultural Rating Act. Thirty years ago, while an active Member of the Liberal Party, I strongly advocated a revision of the taxation and rating of Agricultural Tenants as unjust and oppressive, so that in supporting that Act I was perfectly consistent. I think some other method of raising the money should have been adopted instead of putting a tax on the staple food of the people. I know that many hon. Members on this side take a different view. But I wish to be consistent, as I have always endeavoured to be in my political life; and as I believe in food being as cheap as possible, I find it impossible to vote for the corn tax. Surely there were open to the right hon. Gentleman other means of raising taxes. If there had been none, I should have voted for the tax on corn, and I could then have justified my action to my constituents, a great majority of whom would, no doubt, have cordially approved. It may, perhaps, be presumptuous for me to tender any advice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but I must say I do consider there are many other things which might have been taxed—for instance, aerated water and bicycles, both or either of which would have yielded an enormous revenue.

Then there is a tax which the Chancellor of the Exchequer put on last year—the sugar tax. I differ from hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to that tax. I think it was a tax which was justified, looking to the abnormally low price of the article, and I think if it had been doubled the Exchequer would have been benefited

without hurting the consumer. The sugar tax has been practically paid by the continental countries where beetroot is grown, and it has been a source of unalloyed satisfaction to me that the continental countries who have so infamously maligned us in connection with the war in South Africa have, by reason of this tax, been bled to the extent of several millions of money to help to pay for it. The sugar tax has yielded £6,400,000 in the past year without anyone feeling it. The price of sugar today is actually lower than when the tax was put on, and I have not the slightest doubt that if that tax had been doubled we should have got as good a revenue as we got this year, and if it had been imposed there would not have been any necessity for either taxing corn and flour, adding to the income tax, or imposing an additional stamp tax on cheques. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth said, there might be something said for an increase in the sugar tax, but nothing could be said in favour of this corn tax. There is another thing to be said as to an additional tax upon sugar, and that is, all the machinery is provided for its collection, and, as I have already said, I maintain that the whole tax will be obtained from the foreigners. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget speech, alluded to the amount of speculation which has been going on in anticipation of an increased tax, but I understand that that speculation has not been much so far as refiners are concerned. No doubt they kept their stocks full in the hope that if the duty was increased it would enable them to struggle over the critical period between now and the coming into operation in 1903 of the Bounties Convention. As no increase of duty has been put on, and as to carry on refining would entail a ruinous loss, I venture to predict that, with the exception of two or three refiners who make specialties, every refinery in this country will be closed. We will then be at the mercy of the continental refiners, and I assert that we will not only lose six to seven millions of Revenue, but that the consumer will have to pay more for their sugar than if the duty had been increased. According to the last returns, there was an overplus of sugar this year of between 700,000 and 800,000 tons in excess of the previous year. Now, there is no country in the world which can take it except this country. This country is the dumping ground for all superfluous produce, and this sugar must inevitably come into this country; and I do not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer is wise in not taking advantage of that for revenue purposes instead of raising other taxes. Every new tax imposed will incur the maximum amount of odium with the minimum amount of revenue. Under those circumstances I cannot but express my regret that he did not see fit to increase the sugar duty. The only objectors would have come from manufacturers of jam and confectionery, but these people have been coining money in recent years and have no competition except *inter se.* I quite agree that all classes should contribute towards the war expenses, but a tax on bread should only have been resorted to when other sources of taxation were exhausted.

As regards the corn tax, I have had several representations from leading farmers in my constituency utterly condemning it, and as feeders it hits them hard. The Chancellor says the tax in corn and flour will not raise the price of bread, but my experience is that when ever flour is advanced, even a 6d. per sack, up goes the price of the loaf. They do not in Scotland grow much wheat, but they use maize to an enormous extent, and also other products coming from abroad. Another objection I have to the tax is that it gives a text for hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House to go up and down the country and preach sermons on free trade and accuse the Government of Protection. There is not the slightest doubt that the feeling in the country against this tax is very great indeed. As regards the cheque stamp tax, the hon. Member who preceded me anticipated every argument I was about to state, so I will not weary the House by going into them again, but I wish to strongly emphasise this point —that the effect of that tax will be to curtail the use of cheques. People will pay in cash rather than in cheques; people who have to pay say £50 a week, and do it now by means of small cheques, will draw one cheque on the bank for the whole amount and pay the smaller amounts in cash. It will further put a

large sum of gold into circulation which otherwise would have been held by the banks, and I maintain it will not yield the amount anticipated by the Chancellor while giving inconvenience and irritation to business people.

I will not urge objections to the addition to the income tax, for while increased taxation is necessary the Chancellor could not well avoid adding to it. I may, however, point out that it will press hardly on men of small or fixed incomes who have their expenditure mapped out, and whose calculations may be upset by this unlooked for impost.

I regret having to oppose the Chancellor's proposals, but what I feel is that I must choose between loyalty to party and consistency. I have often said that in my opinion a man should be as consistent in politics as in the affairs of every-day life. It may be a high ideal, but holding these views I am compelled to put consistency before party.

*(5.40.) MR. HALDANE (Haddington): The remarkable speech which this Committee has just listened to should give the Government some cause for reflection. Like the hon. Member opposite, I know Sootland, and nothing has struck me more than the obvious repugnance with which the great new departure of this Budget has been received both by the people and the Press of Scotland. Anybody who reads the leading articles appearing in the *Scotsman* at this moment cannot fail to realise that even with them the breaking strain is nearly reached. Scotland does not support a Conservative Government very willingly, and the strain which the corn duty has placed on the electors in Scotland of the present majority is very great indeed.

I am not going to follow the hon. Member into his suggestions for alternative taxation. A tax on bicycles or sugar may be good, but such taxes are attended by difficulties which can only be considered by experts who are engaged on these matters for months before the Budget statement is made. I agree with the hon. Member opposite that there may be times when, from the necessities of the case, you must resort to indirect taxation upon the food of the people. I am no dogmatist or fanatic in these matters, but I for one would consent to such a duty only with the greatest reluctance. I should only consent after there had been a most careful preliminary inquiry to show not only that such taxation was absolutely necessary, but on whose shoulders the burden would fall. Many people in this country live on the narrowest margin of subsistence, and a tax of this kind falls on the poor of this country with a weight which has no parallel in any other tax. Have the Government made such exhaustive inquiries that they are enabled to say that they had got adequate knowledge on this topic? Another reason for my objection to this tax is that in this country we possess a great manufacturing industry; but that industry rests on no artificial advantages belonging to us as a nation. Our coal fields have always existed, but coal is getting more expensive to obtain, and we have no advantage of the kind which marks us out as the pioneers and leads us to be the pioneers of the world. We have no supplies of iron and steel to compare with those of the United States. It is only by the industry and energy of the Anglo-Saxon race that we have been enabled to keep the great position which we have won. If we have kept it, I think that one fact has contributed not a little to our success—the fact that this country has been the dumping-ground, if we choose to call it so, of the raw materials—materials essential for commerce and manufacture—and to the policy that lets them in. Any departure from this principle with regard to these raw materials or to food—for cheap food is an element in successful production and competition—is to my mind a source of possible mischief. Another objection to indirect taxation is that it tends to destroy the sense of responsibility which accompanies direct taxation. At the same time I quite recognise that the time has come when further taxation must be raised. I do not see any prospect of a change in the movement of national expenditure. For one reason, that expenditure has risen, not as an isolated case, but concurrently with the rising of the national expenditure in other countries. We are spending more because we have a larger house, a larger family, a higher way of living, new

necessities which have come from an improved condition of things, and we cannot satisfy these needs at the old cheap rate. Then, we are face to face with new rivalries such as we have never had to meet before. I anticipate that in two Departments we shall see a very material increase of our expenditure in the next ten years. To preserve the immense volume of trade which we still possess we shall have to spend a great deal of money on education. In naval matters, too, we cannot stand still. That is the reason why Germany is creating a navy and the United States have created a navy, and that is the reason why we cannot stand still. Other countries are increasing their fleets and we cannot fall behind. In these circumstances some hon. Members take a rather gloomy view of the situation; but notwithstanding that there has been grievous extravagance in the past, I do not think that as a nation we are so badly off as some prophets of evil would lead us to suppose. Let us compare our case with that of France. Taking her expenditure for Imperial purposes as the basis, and eliminating local expenditure, the outlay on Government by France is about 142 millions sterling. That, for a population of 38,000,000, as compared with ours of over 41,000,000, works out at £3 13s. 5d. per head.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): That includes local expenditure.

* MR. HALDANE: No, I think not. The basis of local expenditure is very different in France, and I have done my best to eliminate it from the account. In Prussia the expenditure is still more difficult to estimate, because you have there to take into account the Imperial contribution to the German Empire as well as the Imperial expenditure of Prussia itself. I make the expenditure there £130,000,000 altogether, which with a population of 34,000,000, gives £3 17s. 6d. per head. I have not included the expenditure on railways, because that appears on both sides of the account. In our own case, taking the normal expenditure at the high figure of £132,000,000, and the population at 41,000,000, it comes out at about £3 5s. per head.

I turn from that to a comparison taken from another side. I have worked out as well as I can the national income of the country. I do not mean the national revenue from taxes, but the national income, which is obtained by all classes of the community, industrial and otherwise. That is always an approximate calculation, but according to the best authorities it may be taken at the present time at about £1,750,000,000. That includes the interest on foreign investments, and my view of its growth is confirmed to a considerable extent by the yield of the income tax during, say, the last forty years. In 1861, a penny on the income tax yielded not much over £1,100,000; this year I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us it would yield about £2,600,000.

* THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Not quite so much; about £2,500,000.

* MR. HALDANE: At any rate, in 1901-2, the yield was £2,400,000, which compares very remarkably with £1,100,000 in 1861. That shows an enormous increase in the national wealth. The same authorities who have made these calculations, have calculated the national income of France at £1,000,000,000, and that of Germany as a whole at £1,300,000,000. Comparing these results, I think they show that of all the nations with their increasing expenditure—I am excluding the United States in this connection, because they stand on an entirely different footing—we, at any rate, are the best fitted to bear that increase of expenditure. I put the necessity of that increase down to education—Germany spends just as much as we do (which I take at £25,000,000, local and imperial) on education, although she is a poorer country; the army and the navy—which are much more costly items now than formerly, because of the greater demands of science upon the weapons of warfare and the vessels which bear them; and the general rise in the social scale, due to increased wealth on the part of individuals, and the greater demands they make upon the Government.

But the comparison does not stop there. If you take Army and Navy together, I find that in Great Britain the normal expenditure on those services is about 3½ per cent. of the national income. In France it amounts to about 4 per cent., and in Germany to 3¼ per cent. There is a striking feature which one cannot leave out of account in connection with these figures. In this country we have no compulsory service, and therefore, have no blood-tax to pay, such as is paid in France and Germany. I am not one of those who deny that there are advantages to be obtained from a certain amount of discipline and training, but I am convinced that in this country we do not realise how seriously compulsory military service interferes with the commercial prospects of those countries. The fact that for two years in the best part of a man's life he is transferred from his occupation into a state of things in which through the summer he has to get up at two o'clock, and in the winter at four o'clock, clean stables, and go through the regular drudgery of the common soldier's life, to be under strict discipline, with no time to read and little time to think, tends to cripple all initiative and resource, and if our commerce is still in a flourishing condition and our workmen unbeaten when they have the same chances of education and training, we owe it not a little to the fact that we have these two years free from that crushing dead-weight. Therefore I should greatly regret if ever the time came when conscription was seriously talked about in this country.

Turning to the naval expenditure only, the figures are remarkable. From a Return granted the other day to the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth, giving the naval expenditure of the great Powers in relation to their trade, I make out that our naval expenditure is very little over 3 per cent. on the volume of our sea-borne trade, which I take at over £870,000,000. In France the percentage is 3·7, and in Germany only 1·3. The German Navy is a very small affair at present, but it is rapidly increasing, and the ratio of the expenditure is likely to be much larger. Considering how enormously greater our Navy is than that of any power, I do not think 3 per cent. is an extravagant premium of insurance to pay on the commerce we have.

I have given these figures to the Committee, not because I do not recognise how serious the growth of expenditure is, but because on the one hand, I feel there are some branches of expenditure which we shall not succeed in reducing—some indeed which I want to increase, such as that on education, and we shall probably have to spend more on the Navy if things go on abroad at the rate they are doing; at any rate there is no prospect of reducing the expenditure on education at present incurred, though perhaps some of the money might be spent in a different way, but that is another matter. I am not putting these figures forward in any spirit of optimism, but because I do not think there is any necessity to sit down and weep over the cost of living at this period. What we have to see to is that by increased endeavours we make sure that the great volume of our commerce and trade remains at its present high level. That needs energy and enterprise, it also requires expenditure of a salvage character, and that expenditure there is no prospect of our being able to abate. In view of the money which all this costs, it is our duty to make such sacrifices as we can in this generation to reduce our debt while the national income remains at its present high standard. France, with a much smaller income, has a debt of £1,200,000,000 raised at a higher rate of charge than we pay. If, as a result of this war, our debt were raised even to £800,000,000, we should still be in a position in which we need not feel depressed. But with this debt in front of us, it is a sacred duty which we owe to the generations coming after us that, while we have this huge national income—which I am not certain we shall be able to preserve, though I believe we shall make every effort in our power to do so—we should make strenuous efforts to pay off debt as rapidly as we can. Our forefathers of the past generation, poorer far than we, did not grudge the sacrifices which were made to bring things into the happy condition in which they were not long ago. Nor should we grudge the sacrifices necessary to leave them very much as they were handed over to us.

The moral seems to be that the defect of this Budget is, not that it raises too much taxation or revenue, but that it raises too little. In this state of things, with the country as rich as it is, I would rather have seen the income tax 2d. higher than

it is going to be than see things remain in their present condition. I am not sure that we have exhausted the resources of civilisation in respect of income tax. We hear a great deal about the impossibility of collecting a graduated income tax. I have a good deal to do with the legislation of the Colonies which comes over to be interpreted and put before the Privy Council. I have constantly to study the income tax in the Australian Colonies. One cannot draw parallels between things in a small country and those in a great country, but, speaking from memory I know there is a great difference made, not only in Victoria, but in other Colonies, between income which consists of interest upon investment —what is called realised property—and income which is realised by the sweat of a man's brow. The one is treated on a wholly different footing from the other. They levy at the source a tax of double the amount on income derived from investments, as compared with that from earnings. Not only so, but there is a great jump. If I remember rightly, the tax on earned income is 4d., and 8d. on realised income up to £2,000 a year. Then there is a jump to 8d. upon earnings over £2,000, and 1s. 4d. upon the interest on investments. That is a principle which has been applied successfully, with great advantage and universal satisfaction, in the colonies. I am not saying that the Government should resort to anything of that sort without the most careful inquiry. One of the attractions of this country to foreigners, who bring their money here, reside here, and are a source of revenue to us, is that the taxation is in some respects comparatively light. I should be sorry to take any step of this kind without seeing where I was going. But I do not think we have got to the limits of direct taxation even yet. I quite agree that the basis of taxation will have to be broadened to bear the burden we have to carry; it may be you will have to raise some indirect taxation. If so, I hope it will be raised after careful inquiry as to those upon whom it may fall. But of this I am sure, that what will occupy the mind of the country is a doubt as to whether the Government have adequately realised the duty which is upon them at the present moment, and that is to prevent the National Debt from growing while you have the means to do so, and whether the Government have considered the far-reaching and grave consequences which the present Budget involves. It is upon that footing that I for one regret that we did not have as part of the notable, and in many respects admirable, speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer some indication that the mind of the Government had been applied to the question as to whom these taxes would ultimately fall upon, and to what extent they would be affected.

*(6.20.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The right hon. Gentleman opposite has just given us a most interesting series of figures, and I agree in the main with the conclusion he derives from them. I seriously question, however, the correctness of his figures themselves. To take one instance. To say that the income of the French people is a little more than half of the income of the English people, I think, shows an absolute want of knowledge of the revenues of France. The French are an extraordinarily rich people, and my opinion is that the income of the French people very nearly approaches that of the English people. France is one of the richest countries in the world, and earns and saves enormous sums of money, and it is capable of bearing almost incredible burdens. It is the misfortune of the House of Commons and of the advocates of economy in the House of Commons, and it is to some extent the misfortune of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the prosperity of this England is so immense and its capacity to bear burdens so extraordinary that, as a matter of fact, no one cares twopence for economy. In passing, I wish to refer briefly to two points. First of all, let me say how completely I agree with the hon. and learned Member for Haddington with regard to the necessity for paying off debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer looks with equanimity to the raising of the National Debt almost to the figure at which it stood during the Napoleonic wars. It is now approaching that high water mark, which we all thought we should never again come near to. This is due to the successive diminutions we have been brought to make in our efforts to pay off our debts.

When the price of Consols was high, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave that as a reason for suspending the Sinking Fund. Now that Consols are low, I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman regards that as another reason for suspending the Sinking Fund. I do earnestly urge upon this House to address itself most seriously to the question of paying off debt. It is easy enough to make wars of all sorts if you are going to pay for them out of money that you do not find but out of money that you owe. It is a bad and demoralising system, and undoubtedly one of the first duties of this country will be, as soon as peace is brought about—and we hope it may be soon—to restore the Sinking Fund and find some means of resuming that diminution of the debt which in recent years we have failed to carry on. It is a bad system, demoralising to those whose votes decide on the issues of peace and war, to raise too much by borrowing.

One word as regards this loan. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was authorised to raise £32,000,000 by loan, but he has only raised, as a matter of fact, £29,500,000, or a little over. With regard to the extra penny upon cheques, the right hon. Gentleman will recognise that we allowed him to have his Resolution as to this additional penny, upon the undertaking that he would re-consider the matter. Let me tell him at once that there is only one sort of re-consideration that will avail him, and that is the abandonment of the tax altogether. You cannot put different stamps on cheques. Moreover, if you exempt the smaller cheques the right hon. Gentleman will get very little at all out of the tax. I recognise that the right hon. Gentleman has shown himself open to conviction in this matter. I know that he is sometimes forced to put on a tax to fill up some vacant space in his Budget, and he is driven occasionally to put on a tax which he has not considered in all its bearings. The right hon. Gentleman has been very candid with us, and I hope his re-consideration of this tax will have the effect of getting rid of it altogether. The duty of distinguishing between the right and the wrong stamp, if two stamps are adopted, cannot be thrown on bankers, and such a modification would not result in any gain to the revenue. Of this cheque tax there is universal disapproval in the Press. The *Scotsman* itself, the very lackey of journalism, has turned against the Government in this matter. I should like just to say one word with regard to the tax on corn. I have already avowed in this House my objection in principle to such a tax, but I felt bound to agree to it on this occasion because of the very serious financial emergency in which we find ourselves. On the ground of emergency I for one am quite disposed to agree to this tax, and I have decided to support it if emergency is shown. I am, however, bound to ask whether this emergency now exists, and if it does not exist I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will find some means of withdrawing this tax, and also the income tax.

Now I come to the question of the income tax, which is the Resolution before us. I have often heard complaints in regard to the income tax upon the ground that the income of the brain worker should be charged at a less rate than incomes derived from property. I do not think so. First of all, what is the income tax? It is like all other taxes, and it is intended to be, a measure of the capacity to pay of the person who is taxed. If the professional man's income ceases, so does the tax. But if the income from property continues for ever, so too does the tax. Therefore it does not seem unfair that the professional man should pay upon his income year by year. I have what I think is a most serious complaint against the method by which the income tax is levied. Theoretically, in my opinion, there is no better tax than the income tax if it were levied equally and impartially over a large area. My complaint is that a system has been introduced of levying the income tax upon what is called the average income of three years. An average is an abstraction; it represents nothing that is actually true. Take a concrete instance. A makes a profit of £1,000 three years ago, of £2,000 last year, and of £3,000 this year. On the average system he will pay 1s. 3d. in the pound on £2,000 although he has made £3,000. B, on the other hand, made three years ago £3,000, last year £2,000,

and this year £1,000. But he too will pay on £2,000 although he has only made £1,000. The fortunate prosperous A with a rising income only pays on half his profits, the unfortunate unprosperous B with a failing income pays on double his profits. He pays, in short, four times as much per cent. as A. That is absurd and unjust, and the more correct and juster system would be to take the actual profits of the year, and levy the tax upon them. A far greater complaint is that the tax falls only on large incomes, allowing the smaller incomes to escape, and thus doubling the tax upon those who pay. A tax was originally supposed to be based upon the measure of the capacity of the taxed person to pay the tax. That is not so in the case of the incometax. That tax is not extended over the whole of the people. It has been stated that the incomes of the people of this country amount to £1,700,000,000. I think it is more than that. But even taking it to be only £1,600,000,000, that is double the amount actually assessed for the income tax at present. In other words, only half the amount received by way of income is taxed. If £1,600,000,000 are taxed at 6d. in the pound it will produce £40,000,000, the yield of the present method of levying income tax at 1s. 3d. in the pound. That is a great scandal in regard to the income tax: it is an absurdity; and it is all because no Chancellor of the Exchequer has yet devised means for obtaining payment, as I am sure he would obtain it, of small rates of income tax from people of small incomes—some such method as that by which it is possible to obtain from the same people payment of the penny postage for every letter posted. It argues a want of the quality of imagination—a quality with which I should have credited the Chancellor of the Exchequer—but I am convinced it is possible to obtain income tax on small incomes if only you could devise a method of payment.

As to a graduated income tax, to which the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire referred, I think he can scarcely have paid attention to the income tax system of this country when he proposes a graduated system. Is he quite aware that two-thirds of the income tax are levied by deduction? Something like £26,000,000 or £27,000,000 of the £39,000,000 is collected before it ever goes into the hands of the taxpayers, and therefore it would be impossible to graduate the income tax on these deductions. If you had a graduated income tax, what method would you adopt in order to ascertain the proper scale of duty? In this country there is nothing to oblige any man to state the whole of his income to the State, unless it be that he calls for a diminution of the tax, or the return of what he considers to have been an unfair assessment. I do think that the weight of this tax as at present levied upon trade is enormous. In the case of the struggling B I have mentioned he pays one-eighth of his income in this tax alone. But take the ordinary case where the revenue of the income tax is £39,000,000. It professes to represent, we are told, at 1/3 in the £ one-sixteenth of the revenue taxed. It is an enormous thing. But the man who pays his proportion of that sixteenth of the revenue in this way, also pays a share of the £35,450,000 of customs; £32,700,000 of excise; £13,200,000 of estate duty; £8,700,000 of stamps; and £2,500,000 of land tax and house duty. In fact, he must pay out of this £100,000,000, what amounts to between £60,000,000 and £65,000,000. It is not too much to say therefore that the ordinary income tax payer, the man with over £160 a year, and certainly the man with over £700 a year, where the abatement allowances cease, pays one-sixth of his income to the State in taxes at this moment. Hon. Gentlemen who have followed my figures will see that I have not overstated it. In other words you call upon a man to give two months of his work to the State—not to his family, not to his business, not to productive business, but to what I would call destructive expenditure. That is a very serious state of things to have arrived at, and I for one only trust that the hon. Member for Oldham will get the Committee he seeks in order to see if we cannot somehow reduce the expenditure which requires a man to work two months of the year for the State and only ten for himself.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has set forth his Estimates for the

requirements of the year, and has added thereto £18,500,000. I think I am accurately representing him, although I have not his words here. He says he will want that sum in any case either for the expenses of the war, or, if the war should cease, for the expenses of peace. I do not know, first of all, whether, if he levies the whole of this £18,500,000 for military expenditure in the case of war going on, that it will be in his power to apply it for the purposes of peace—for the rebuilding and restocking of Boer farms. Let me here say that I recognise in him the generosity that makes him ready to rebuild the Boer farms, and, I believe that the country will entirely agree with him. This is a very peculiar conjuncture. Negotiations have been opened for peace, and we all of us hope, and some of us are very strongly of the belief, that the negotiations will end in peace, but if they do end in peace, probably the whole of this £18,500,000, certainly a large portion, will not be required out of the Budget this year. Of course, I acknowledge that the prerogative of making peace or war is the prerogative of the Crown, but the giving of the sinews of war is the prerogative of this House. It is by giving or withholding money that this House expresses approbation or disapprobation of the policy of the Government, and I say that before you ask us to provide this extra £18,500,000 you ought to let us see the issue of the negotiations which are now being carried on. They may render the £18,500,000 needless. No doubt the making of peace is expensive, but if peace should be made I cannot suppose that you can possibly require £18,500,000 in order to bring back the troops, to pay bounties, and to pay such sums as you will be willing to grant to rebuild farms. On the contrary, I do not think it is lawful to divert the money for such purposes as this case. On the other hand let the House look at it in this way. When we get the Papers showing the issue of these negotiations, whether the issue be peace or war, it is conceivable that the House may disapprove of the conduct of His Majesty's Government. It is conceivable that this House may think that the Government has made an unfavourable peace, or that it has gone back without adequate reason into war. But in the meantime we vote £18,500,000. I submit that is the wrong order of procedure. I submit that the House in respect of £18,500,000 is really put in the position of suggesting that they approve of the conduct of His Majesty's Government in regard to these negotiations, of which we know nothing. This is not a new point, for the same contingency occurred in 1856. I will read what Sir George Cornwall Lewis said on that occasion. The Government then did not ask for the supplies of the year, plus £18,500,000. It asked for four months supplies only, and the reasons given are so applicable to the present day that they might almost be repeated on this occasion. In the beginning of 1856, there was a strong possibility of peace being made, and in April of that year it was made, Sir George Cornwall Lewis said—

"If these Resolutions should receive the approbation of the Committee, and afterwards obtain the sanction of Parliament, they will provide ample ways and means for the present quarter, and for the commencement of the ensuing financial year. We shall then be in a position to judge how far the negotiations which are now in progress in a neighbouring country are likely to terminate in a safe and honourable peace. If, happily, they should lead to the issue, Her Majesty's Government will have it in their power deliberately to consider the state of the revenue, to reduce the Estimates submitted to the House, and to consider what expenditure will be required in the following year, and how that expenditure may best be met. If, unhappily, those negotiations should not terminate in so desirable an event as a peace which will cement, in a lasting and solid manner, the interests of Europe, it will then be the duty of the Government to appeal to this House to place them in a position in which they will be enabled to meet the large expenditure for warlike purposes and to continue that struggle in which we have been engaged for the last two years." [(3) *Debates*, CXL., 1240.]

I say the condition of things is exactly the same now as on 22nd February, 1856, when these words were uttered. I say more that this House should not be called upon to provide for expenditure during the whole year on a war which may be over in a few weeks; and especially with regard to the £18,500,000 the House will be parting with the constitutional control over the expenditure of the Government if it gives the Chancellor of the Exchequer the enormous sums

he asks. I should like to know why he has adopted a different method from that which was adopted in 1856, and in 1814, at the end of the great struggle against Napoleon. Why should he not ask us for three or four months supply and see whether peace is made, and then come for more if the war continues. I think the course pursued in 1856 is the right one. I think that in asking the House to take another course he is leading it into what may be a trap, because if the House does not approve of the conduct of the Government when they see the account of the negotiations for peace they will have parted with their power to express disapprobation, for they will already have voted these supplies. This may seem a far-fetched point, but the sum involved is enormous, and in my opinion it is an important constitutional point. I think the right hon. Gentleman has departed from precedent and sound constitutional practice in asking us to agree to an expenditure which we all earnestly hope may not require to be made.

(6.50.) MR. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I wish to bring before the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer an article of general consumption which is overtaxed. I think the right hon. Gentleman should know that the article of spirits is most excessively taxed. Would this House believe that in proportion to the first cost the duty on spirits is enormous. You can get for 1s. 2d. a gallon of spirits 25 over proof, and on this article there is 13s. 9d. duty. That is equal to 11s. on the proof gallon. I think that beer is possibly sufficiently taxed, but the duty on beer is 2s. 3d. on the alcoholic strength as against 11s. on spirits. I simply place this before the House because this is a day for ventilating grievances. I say this as representing the Irish and many of the Scotch people in this trade. I present my case simply in figures. I do not want to dwell upon and elaborate the matter. It is supposed by many that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not made any additional tax on spirits. Now this is a mistake. He has actually put an additional tax on spirits. He has placed a tax of 3d. per cwt. on corn. Seven-eighths of the ordinary corn used for distillation is imported, and therefore that is a tax of 5s. per ton, which is equal to 1d. per gallon on whisky. It is possibly something less, but very little—perhaps it is seven-eighths of a penny. I do not know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he put this 5s. a grain thought of this matter, but it is an additional tax on spirits. I do not expect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will make any remission, but I say that the first time he has an opportunity of remitting any taxes it ought to be done on the article of spirits, but I believe we will all be very much older before there is a remission of anything. I think it is rather a pity that the Chancellor of the Fxchequer should have put any tax upon Indian corn. In this matter I speak for my own country, because in Ireland Indian corn is an article largely consumed by the poorer people. Indian corn cannot be grown in this country, for climatic reasons which prevent us producing maize. Of course we can produce barley, oats and wheat, and I should not have objected if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put two shillings or three shillings on these articles, because such a tax would have benefited my country very much.

(6.55.) MR. E. B. FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I must ask the kind indulgence of the House as it is the first time I have had the honour of addressing it, and I shall not take up much time as there is not very much to be said on this question. With reference to the stamp duty, the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is ingenious because if a man wants to send a small cheque he will have to pay the additional penny, or, if he does not choose to send a cheque, he will have to depart from his usual practice and send a postal order, so that, in either case, he will have to pay an extra duty. I smiled when I heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer state that he thought bankers would welcome this proposal because fewer cheques would be drawn. Whatever may be the case with London bankers, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that country

bankers do not like his proposal. London bankers do not charge any commission on the turnover or pay interest on the balances, but in the country bankers do charge a commission on the turnover and they allow interest on balances; therefore from the country banker's point of view, if this tax lessens the turnover they will not like it at all. I think this tax may lead very much to the hoarding of money and to a less use of cheques than obtains at the present time. Hitherto the practice has been to use as little gold as possible, but what will happen now? The general public and small tradesmen will pay all their small amounts by cash or else they will go to the Post Office and obtain Postal Orders. Consequently they will use fewer cheques and there will be more danger of theft because they will have to keep more money in their tills. I do not think it would be right to say that this is a very serious matter, but it is well known that cheques are a very convenient and safe method of conducting business transactions, and therefore it is a method which should not be discouraged. I have been told that the Central Bankers' Association have stated that quite 20 per cent. of the whole of the cheques passing through the Clearing House are for sums under £2. I look upon this proposal as harassing and troublesome, and as, more or less, a pin-prick against traders. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, I hope, will not accept the suggestion that, while cheques drawn on business accounts should be still subject to the 1d. stamp, cheques drawn on other accounts should be subject to the proposed additional duty. How can a banker decide between the two? It has also been suggested that there should be a differentiation between cheques above and below a certain sum. That would lead to a serious interference with the banking trade of the country, because cheques coming from the country have to be cleared and got off in time for the post, and this differentiation would certainly involve delay, and consequently, inconvenience. I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will do away with this harassing legislation altogether.

Mr. E. B. Faber.

*(7.0.) MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): I cannot congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the Budget he has put before us this year, although I think we may congratulate ourselves upon the fact that he has put before us proposals which will bring about united opposition to the Budget on this side of the House. Of course I should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman where I can, and I wish to congratulate him upon the fact that he has made a rather larger contribution this year towards the cost of the war, by means of annual taxation, than he did last year. Last year I find that out of £73,000,000 spent upon the war, he only paid £20,000,000 out of annual taxation; but this year I find that out of £64,000,000 he proposes to take at least £24,000,000 out of annual taxation. That is not a big increase, but it is something, and I entirely agree with the hon. Member for West Islington that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might very well have done something more towards paying for the war out of the annual expenditure of the country. It seems to me very unsatisfactory that in times of prosperity like the present we should be placing still further burdens upon posterity for a war for which we alone are responsible. It seems somewhat contemptible that we who have for several years past been shouting about our patriotism should, when the time comes for making sacrifices to pay the bill, make proposals for placing the burdens upon posterity which we ought to pay ourselves. We are leaving posterity to pay much too large a share of the cost of our policy in South Africa. I know there are some hon. Members who will tell us that we ought not to pay all the cost of this war, and that the time will come when we shall be able to put some part of the cost upon the Transvaal. I look upon that as an idle dream. I think if you cannot make the Transvaal pay anything at the present time, you will find that you are able to get precious little out of that country in the future.

Believing as I do that we ought to have paid ourselves a much larger proportion towards the cost of the war, I am one of those who think that more

than one penny extra ought to have been placed upon the income tax. I think it would have been just as simple to have put twopence upon the income tax. I believe the country was expecting an increase of twopence upon the income tax, and there would have been no more grumbling about an increase of twopence than there will be about an increase of one penny. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer heard the sigh of relief which went round the House when he announced his intention of putting an additional penny on the income tax, I think the right hon. Gentleman must have been sorry that he did not make it twopence. The poorest classes of the people are being asked to pay for this war by taxes on their food, while the wealthy classes have to pay through the income tax. There are, however, a large number of people with incomes ranging from £100 to £400 a year who are only being called upon to pay a very small portion indeed towards the cost of the war. I maintain that all sections of the community should be taxed. I am not going to say that the best way to do that would have been to do away with exemptions under the income tax. I think it is just possible that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may have put on his extra stamp duty with the idea that he was reaching a large number of persons. I wish to point out, however, that this tax will fall more heavily upon people with small incomes than it will upon people with large incomes. The very fact that you never hear an hon. Member in this House say a word in favour of the stamp tax is enough to show that it is an iniquitous tax. I think it is quite possible that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's estimate may be perfectly right as to what he will realise by the stamp duty, because if he does not get it by means of cheques he will get it all the same, because a larger number of postal orders will be used.

I am inclined to think that the bankers will compel the right hon. Gentleman to give up the stamp tax. Though it may be difficult to tax the small income tax payers at the same rate that everybody else was taxed, I do think there is a way in which the right hon. Gentleman might have raised a considerable sum. I suggest that these people might be more adequately taxed by a re-organisation of the house duty, which is levied only on houses over £20 a year. If the house duty were raised to a uniform rate of 8d., instead of remaining at the varying rates of 3d., 6d., and 9d., a very considerable sum would be added to the revenue of the country. If the house duty was raised to 8d. in the £ all round, instead of raising £1,700,000 this tax would produce at least £4,000,000. Of course I am not suggesting that he should levy such a tax on Ireland, but I do say that if he were to raise the house duty to a uniform rate of 8d. instead of 3d., 6d., or 9d. he would add considerably to his revenue and he would make those who are now escaping pay their fair share towards the cost of this war.

I suppose it would not be in order to say much about the bread tax tonight, and I do not propose to do so. I wish, however, to state that I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have got his money without putting this most obnoxious tax upon the food of the people of this country. I call it obnoxious on more grounds than one. In the first place, it is a very wasteful tax, because in order to get his £2,500,000 the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take out of the pockets of the consumers a sum of between £8,000,000 and £10,000,000 of money. Another great objection I have to it is the old argument of the thin end of the wedge. I am not talking so much now of the Protective character of the tax, but in my opinion if you once get a 1s. duty on corn that tax will become very much like the income tax. At present it is a very easy thing to put an extra 1d. on the income tax and an extra 1s. on beer, and in the case of any future Chancellor of the Exchequer it will be very easy to put another 1s. on corn, and that as a Liberal I very much object to. It seems to me that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might very well have raised the money that he will get out of this tax in one or two different ways that are far less objectionable and far less hurtful to the country. This being a war tax—of course I should not have suggested it otherwise—it would be far less hurtful to the country if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put another

halfpenny upon sugar. The right hon. Gentleman said that the sugar tax had not been felt in this country, and I believe that to be true. That to m mind is a good reason why he should put another halfpenny on sugar and get another £5,000,000. It might be resented by the sugar-raising colonies, but the right hon. Gentleman is raising money to carry on these colonies for the next eighteen months or so. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that the tax upon beer had reached its limit, that no more beer was sold, and that the tax was being taken out of the quality. That being so, that is a good reason for not taxing beer; but I would venture to point out that the right hon. Gentleman would have got the same result out of the reform of the licences of fully licensed houses. The present licensing law bears very heavily, as we all know, on a poor house. Why a poor house should pay more than a rich house is beyond my comprehension. I have in my mind at the present moment a house rated at £20 or £30. That house pays 50 per cent. of its value, yet a house rated at £600 or £700 pays only 15 to 20 per cent. for its licence. I think it would be far fairer to make the rateable value of the house a basis for the price of the licence, which should be a percentage on the rateable value. The trade is a monopoly, and the value of these houses is increased by its being a monopoly to three or four times their ordinary value, and I think it would be only fair that the country should get something from them by means of higher licences. I believe by a re-adjustment of the licences for public houses the Chancellor of the Exchequer might easily get £5,000,000 increased revenue instead of the £1,700,000 that he is getting now under this new taxation.

(7.17.) MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie), who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say: I venture to say a few words in this debate on behalf of the great trading communities. I wish to say, on behalf of the trade in my native city and trade generally, that I think these duties are calculated to irritate and disturb trade to the maximum. The trade of the country is not in a condition of great prosperity. The prolongation of the war, the high price of coal, and the cessation of production of gold have had a very great effect upon it. There are times and occasions when trade, though not prosperous, must submit and pay heavy imposts when they are necessary; but I do not think there exists at the present time any necessity for placing the additional taxes on the trade of the country which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to place upon it. What is the necessity? It is plain it cannot be a great necessity because of the amounts. We are face to face, roughly speaking, with a deficit of £41,000,000, and can it be said to be a great necessity to pick out £5,000,000 and say it is a great necessity and that trade must pay it? I assume, therefore, the result to be derived from these taxes on trade being so insignificant in amount, that it cannot be an essential and absolute crying need. Not only is there no crying necessity from that point of view, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to deal with an expenditure of which he is not very certain, and he has therefore estimated on a large scale. He did not do that in the Budgets of the last two years; the supplementary Budgets for the last two years show that on those occasions he did not lean in this direction of excess, he rather under-estimated——

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I did not under-estimate last year.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; perhaps I used the wrong expression, but I assumed from his own statement that the present Budget is a Budget which has been liberally estimated. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that he was not able to estimate the contribution which the Transvaal will be able to make. On all these grounds I assume there is no Imperial necessity for the imposition of the £5,000,000 of new taxes which we have to pay under this Budget.

I may be told that it is necessary to adjust the burden of taxation as between the various classes of the community, but I do not know that this is the time to adjust the burden of taxation as between those various classes. Is this £5,000,000 a war tax or an adjustment of the burden of taxation? In the very necessary task

of adjusting the burden of taxation careful consideration should be given to all conditions involved, and proposals of such great consideration ought not to be pressed upon the Committee at the time they are pressed upon us. If Parliament is ever to review our existing system for the purpose of adjusting the burden of taxation as between the various classes of the community, I submit that that task ought not to be taken at a time when we are overburdened by the necessities of the war.

So much for the £5,000,000 which is sought to be placed mainly upon the trade of the country. What are the taxes in themselves? I do not say a word about the cheque stamp duty, because it is not profitable to slay the slain, but in passing I would just press on the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to listen to any suggestions as to differentiation on the question of this stamp tax, which can only result in confusion and annoyance in banking and commercial circles, and difficulties without end. With regard to the income tax, which is the next item, the income tax is regarded by many as a splendid war tax if it be justly and scientificially levied. But I look on the income tax from this point of view—is it fair?—and not from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I submit that the income tax has not been scientifically managed by Chancellors of the Exchequer. It has not been kept low, say at 4d. in the £, and then pushed up when there was a war, as it should have been. That is not the way it has been managed. In times of financial difficulty it has always been the practice to put something on the income tax. I venture to say a word on behalf of the poor payers of income tax. Take the position of a man earning £700 or £800 a year; he has to pay on income tax £50, or one-sixteenth of his income, which is equivalent to giving a month of his time to the public service. These men who have this large proportion of income tax to pay also have to pay their full share of all the other burdens of local and Imperial taxation, and they have not only to pay for their living but to make provisions for those who live after them. These things do not trouble the men of property. Let us get back to the income tax as an elastic war tax, to be used only in times of emergency, and keep it low in times of peace. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, speaking on this topic two years ago, said that if the income tax was to remain at anything like the pitch at which it has existed during the last two years its incidence must be reconsidered. Yet the right hon. Gentleman has brought forward a scheme for increasing the tax, but he has not brought forward any scheme for the reconsideration of the incidence of taxation. It is a crushing and terrible burden upon those who have to bear it now, especially the poor taxpayers.

Now, permit me to say a few words on the last item, the corn tax. In addressing myself to that, I regret extremely to find myself being asked again in the history of this country to vote for a bread tax. I had hoped that no Government would have resorted to such an expedient as asking the House to vote a tax of this sort. I fear this can only be regarded as a disguise, and a thin disguise, for returning to the doctrine of Protective duties. I believe those who look on sometimes see more of the game than those who play, and that some are jubilant with delight at this tax. Even in the newspapers there are praises given to those who are departing from the traditions of free trade. I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman in the least, because I believe he is as staunch a free trader as most of us, but I must say that many on my side of this House think this is a very great departure from some of the most glorious traditions of our fiscal policy.

It has been said that the income tax can be raised or reduced with comparative ease. So can the corn tax. The difficulty is not to raise or lower the tax, but to get it at all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that this is a small tax, and that the amount is of no consequence. But whether it is a small tax or a large one, the principle upon which it is dependent is the principle that the right hon. Gentleman must face. It is opposed to one of the canons of sound finance. It is a tax on the prime necessity of life of the great bulk of the people, and on that ground

alone it ought to be most gravely considered by this House, and, I think, strongly opposed. It is a tax only a small part of which will find its way to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as is illustrated by the statement of the hon. Member opposite with regard to the markets. A rise of 3d. per cwt. on wheat is practically equivalent to $\frac{1}{8}$d. on a four-pound loaf. But bakers do not raise their prices by $\frac{1}{8}$d; there is no coin to express it; they resort to the easier plan of increasing the price by $\frac{1}{4}$d. or $\frac{1}{2}$d. But the farthing has practically gone out of vogue, and the great bulk of bakers in the country are either talking of doing so or have actually raised the price by $\frac{1}{2}$d. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer expects to get £2,500,000 out of this corn tax at the rate of $\frac{1}{8}$d. on a four-pound loaf, it follows that if the consumer pays $\frac{1}{2}$d. he pays £10,000,000 in consequence of the operation of the tax, of which, as I say, the Exchequer benefits to the extent of only £2,500,000. I cannot but regard that as a very serious flaw in any method of taxation. If I am right in my calculation, it means that this is a tax which the people will pay to the extent of four times the amount by which the Exchequer will profit by its infliction.

Another objection to the corn tax is that it not only makes the consumer pay more for those articles which are imported, but that it also raises the price of the home produce. Mr. Lowe when he abolished this tax made a similar observation, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer remarked that it was a beautiful theory. I am afraid the facts have borne out that theory, because the day after this duty was imposed the price of corn advanced by exactly the amount of the duty. The statement had been made that English wheat did not advance, that English farmers had patriotically declined to raise the price of their wheat, but that foreign importers, who had foreign grain in stock, had with their usual wickedness and perverseness raised their prices. The contention is preposterous. If I have home grown grain which is worth 30s., proportionately to foreign grain at 28s., the moment any cause—particularly a duty—raised the price of the foreign grain to 29s. I put my price up as well. Of course I do; everybody does. Take the case of a 10s. duty. Is it not obvious what the effect will be? If you burden the importation of wheat to the extent of 10s. or whatever the amount may be, the price of every article affected, whether it is home grown or not, goes up proportionately. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer looks at the newspapers today he will find it recorded that the price of every article put upon the Customs list in respect of this tax has advanced in exact proportion to the amount of the tax, absolutely regardless of whether the articles are home produce or imported. Not only that, but a great many articles which were not on the list have also advanced.

This system of taxation is open to another very grave objection. It breaks up that simplicity of our fiscal system in which we have been wont to take pride. This simple tax of 3d. upon wheat has already resulted in the addition of about forty articles to those upon which duties have to be charged. Then, at the end of the list, there is the statement that—

"Every article containing any of the above is liable to taxation."

I should not be at all surprised if in consequence of that little remark at the end of the list, the forty articles to which I have referred were largely added to. Under our system of free trade we have had an experience of open ports which we are now going back upon. It is a very serious matter that this policy of open ports is to be changed for one of Custom House restrictions. My noble friend below me says that the tax will not benefit the English farmer. He is better informed than many of his friends. Anyone who will take the trouble to see how the incidence of the proposed tax will affect English farmers will discover that instead of giving them an advantage it will be quite the other way. Those who grow wheat will obtain this 1s. a quarter. But what about those who, so to speak, grow cheese, or milk, or meat? These will have to pay an increased price for their raw materials, and they are already stirring in the matter. Chambers of agriculture are passing resolutions insisting that foreign beef should be taxed to the extent of 3d. per cwt. Why should our poor farmers, in addition to their other troubles, be

compelled to pay 5s. per ton more for their raw materials? Whatever may be said about wheat-growing, there can be no doubt that the production of meat is the most prosperous department of the farmers' business, and yet this Government, which takes credit for being the friend of the farmers, and which has done great service to the farmers, has, under this system, for the sake of £2,500,000, stirred up among its farmer friends the general impression that nothing can be done except to impose a further duty upon all meat which comes from abroad.

I feel strongly upon this subject. I fear the Government do not apprehend the feeling which is entertained in the the country on this matter. They are departing from the fiscal principles which have guided this country through many years. If it is the intention of the Government to impose a serious tax upon the food of the people, then, of course, I am doing them no injustice. What they are doing is certainly making the people suspicious and giving them the impression that that is the intention. Men pray not to be led into the ways of temptation. What about the temptation to right hon. Gentlemen who in the future sit in the seat of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? They will be subjected to a very grave temptation. This will be the easiest way for them to raise money. The Government were returned to protect the Union. In my opinion, I may be wrong—I hope I am—they are stirring up an agitation which will cause throughout the country very strong feelings of suspicion, and which may have far more effect on the result of the next election than they have any idea of. As for myself, I still remain a strong and faithful adherent of the principles to which I was pledged, but I would follow no man, not even this Government, into the lobby in support of a system which while it lasted was disastrous in the highest degree, and which, if again resorted to, will be equally disastrous.

(7.42.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I cannot help feeling pleased that a decided note has been struck by two Scottish Members with whom I have not the pleasure of agreeing in general politics, but who, it is evident, have the interests of their constituents at heart. The hon. Member who has just sat down has expressed, as everyone acquainted with Glasgow must know, the feeling which is very widely spread in that great community. I believe that that feeling is by no means confined to the inhabitants of cities. My hon. friend the Member for East Perthshire, in his short but pointed speech the other night, was the first to indicate that in some respects this tax would be a serious injury to the farmers and breeders of cattle, and I should not be the least surprised to find that from a section of the agricultural community as well as from the workers in the cities there comes the strongest opposition to the proposal. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has raised a question of the greatest difficulty, affecting more than one class, which will not be suffered to drop, even if he succeeds in pressing through the measure which he has unfortunately for the moment launched.

But I rose, not for the purpose of discussing the corn tax—we are to have an opportunity of considering that tomorrow night—but to advert to a remark of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when introducing the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman said that in imposing new taxation a Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have two things in view—first, that the tax should not be of an irritating nature, and, next, that it should produce a large return. We all recognised the force of that observation, and we were proportionately surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman immediately afterwards proposing a tax open to both those objections, viz., the additional penny on cheques. I can hardly conceive a tax more likely to create vexation and annoyance out of all proportion to the amount of return. By this time those of us who read the daily Press must have perceived that that is the case. In Scotland there is as much irritation on the subject as there evidently is among the country bankers, for whom the hon. Member opposite spoke, and as there is among the bankers in the City, who have held a meeting today on the subject. I need not repeat what has been said as to the annoyance the tax will create or as to the difficulty the right hon. Gentleman will find in introducing any modification of

the proposal. The matter is really not irritating to those of us who use cheques merely for private purposes. An additional 10s. or 15s. a year is a very small matter. But it will seriously affect many kinds of businesses in which great numbers of cheques for small amounts are drawn. I have had a letter giving the case of a firm which does a very large business, and which gives small bonuses on cases which are returned. It pays these small bonuses by cheques, which exceed in number the enormous total of 30,000 a year. For a firm of that kind to be debarred, as it would be, from paying those amounts by cheques, would be a great inconvenience and annoyance, and might possibly induce it to give up what they had found to be a profitable mode of doing business. Then there are firms which have adopted the admirable principle of dividing their profits with their employees, and at frequent intervals they pay, as a sort of bonus, these shares of the profits in small cheques. That is a practice which I am afraid will in many cases be given up if this proposal is adhered to. We ought to be exceedingly slow to adopt any tax which can directly operate as a discouragement to thrift, and I am assured by those who know the working classes that this proposal will discourage the opening of small banking accounts. A great many people who now find it an advantage to keep small banking accounts will not keep those accounts if they have to pay this extra penny upon cheques. Then again, when a small cheque is paid to a workman, he is less likely to spend it when it takes the form of something to put in the bank, and if that small amount was paid to him in the form of cash the workman would be much more likely to spend it. Those are two illustrations of the way the present system of cheques operates to promote thrift amongst working people. I am sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be the last person to wish to discourage habits of that kind, and if he finds upon inquiry that these statements are true and that the effect of this extra tax on cheques would have the effect of discouraging thrift, I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman will agree to reconsider this tax. The growth of our present banking system is a natural growth; it is the product of the new commercial conditions of the last thirty or forty years; and we ought to be very slow to interfere with what has been a natural development of economic forces, which we know from employers, and from the banking community, who are in the habit of paying these large sums, is a development which has been attended with very great convenience. I hope when the right hon. Gentleman makes his promised statement he will be able to tell us that he intends to substitute something else for this tax.

(7.50.) MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I think the income taxpayers are somewhat hardly dealt with by the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman. I am quite sure that the bankers will not thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his Budget. In a time of profound peace we had an income-tax of 8d. in the £, and year by year it has been gradually increased since the war. A larger sum ought to have been found by the War Loan, and no further recourse ought to have been had to the income-tax payers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should have displayed more originality. The extra penny on cheques is a needless and irritating tax, which I believe has been condemned from one end of the country to the other. A banker said to me that a more silly and idiotic tax he had never heard of—that the only thing that could compare with it was the match tax, and he believed that this was a worse tax than that. I do not know whether it has occurred to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if the effect of this tax results in drawing a large number of cheques from being used, then undoubtedly more coin will have to be employed. Only a few years ago we had to find large sums of money for the restoration of gold coins to their nominal value, and I should like to know if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is prepared to bring in another Gold Coinage Act. If this change produces more wear and tear of our coins, then the Exchequer will be called upon to restore those coins to their nominal value. There is another subject on which I complain very much. We have been told that later on in the session we are to be called upon to provide another dole for

our West Indian Colonies. I should be only too happy to give them any assistance to which they are legitimately entitled, but for the last six or seven years our West Indian Colonies have been clamouring for countervailing duties upon sugar. Because the Government refused to give our West Indian subjects the remedy they desire, I do not think that is any ground for coming to the British taxpayer for another dole for the unfortunate Colonists in the West Indies.

Last year we imposed a tax upon coal, and I entirely agree that every year the necessity of keeping as much coal in these Islands increases. What has been the result of the coal tax? The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a tax of 1s. per ton as an export duty upon coal, and then he proceeded to exempt all existing contracts. The right hon. Gentleman could have got another £500,000 this year if he had not exempted existing contracts. If the right hon. Gentleman desires to make the coal tax effective he ought to raise it to 2s. 6d., because it is a vital matter to this country that we should keep the coal here. There is plenty of use for the coal in this country, and having regard to the very high price which coal has reached, something ought to be done to keep the coal at home to be used by our own manufacturers. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer requires another scource to tax I can suggest a means of raising a very considerable sum which would at the same time assist our manufacturers. My suggestion is that he should place a tax on exported china clay and marl clay. This clay is only found in Cornwall, Devon, and Dorset. Such a tax would be of great assistance to our china and earthenware manufacturers. At the present time a great deal of china clay is shipped to the Continent. and continental manufacturers are actually able to get it cheaper than our own manufacturers in the Midlands on account of railway rates in this country whereas the Continental manufacturers have only to pay the cost of transport by sea. It is a great hardship that our English manufacturers should be subjected to this drawback, which could be remedied by the imposition of such a tax as I have suggested.

Undoubtedly the ordinary expenditure of this country has gone up by leaps and bounds in recent years. I do not know whether the First Lord of the Treasury will allow me to call his attention to the fact that the increase in the ordinary expenditure of this country began in the year when his new Supply Rule came into operation. If you reduce the amount of criticism with regard to Supply, you will find all the Departments will take advantage of the fact that the watchful eye of the House is withdrawn from the ordinary expenditure of the country, and they will spend money just as fast as they like, and spend it in any direction they choose. I hope that fact will not be lost sight of by the First Lord of the Treasury when he comes to deal with this question, and I hope greater opportunities will be given for controlling the enormous expenditure of this country. It is a fact that if any one suggests any reform the Chancellor of the Exchange at once does his best to snuff him out at once. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer wishes to have a reduction in the expenditure of this country he should show that he is determined to introduce economy himself, and not content himself with delivering long orations on the virtues of economy. I am afraid that this Budget will not give satisfaction to the country at large, and I feel certain that as far as manufacturers are concerned they will consider it one of the most unfortunate Budgets we have had for many years. (8.5.)

(8.32.) MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): The widespread opposition which is felt to this Budget in the country, and which has manifested itself so strongly tonight in the almost uniform condemnation brought against it by hon. Gentlemen opposite, relieves me from the temptation to inflict a long speech on the Committee. But there is one point on which I should like to say a few words. I know very well that if I were to speak on the question of the corn duty, I should not in the least influence the hon Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, and still less the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of

the Exchequer. I am also well aware that if I were to follow the cou se adopted by some of my hon. friends, and were to lay before the Committee the particular schemes which I should have adopted had I been Chancellor of the Exchequer, they would not receive that consideration which, in my opinion, they would deserve. Therefore, unlike my hon. friends, I shall not throw away pearls of financial wisdom tonight. There is, however, one point in the Budget on which I understand the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in a state approaching penitence, and that is the question of the additional penny stamp on cheques. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer is very much misled indeed if he supposes that it is merely the users of small cheques who will be hit by this particular tax. I can assure him that small tradespeople will suffer very severely from it. I will take the case of a small village shopkeeper or tradesman who is making £150 or £160 a year out of his business. I have inquired of country bankers of some experience in my own constituency as to the habits of these people, and I find that they would probably cash four cheques a week for sums varying from £2 to £5. The additional penny in such a case will mean that you are actually putting an equivalent of 3d. in the pound income tax on that man's income. Not only that, but the tax will fall heaviest on the industrious man who turns over his capital most frequently, because the more cheques he draws the heavier the tax will fall on him. The effect will be that these small tradesmen will cease to deposit their money in banks as at present, and will keep it in their tills which will lead to a very considerable increase in burglary. When I say that, it must not be thought that I am drawing on my imagination, I am assured that will be the result. When the Scotch banks some years ago ceased to pay a small rate of interest on ordinary deposits, the small shopkeepers kept more money in their tills than they used, and the consequence was a very large increase in the number of small burglaries in country shops. I feel perfectly certain that if this tax is insisted on it will have a similar effect. I am sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is honestly minded, has no desire to encourage burglary, but if this tax is insisted on that will be the result.

(8.38.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer must consider that although the Budget has not been enthusiastically received, it certainly has not met with any serious opposition in the House. I should like to say a few words on the special subject for today, namely, the income tax. I have always taken a very great interest in that tax, and although I must candidly acknowledge that I do not like the increase, still I feel that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been right in putting it on, inasmuch as he has made a new departure in enlarging indirect taxation. The proportion of direct to indirect taxation is so important that I think it would be unfair, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise a large amount by indirect taxation, without at the same time increasing direct taxation. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington referred to the system which is met with in some countries—I think in France and in America—of having different rates of income tax for what are called spontaneous incomes—that is, incomes derived from investments, and for incomes derived from current labour. On several occasions I brought up a Resolution in this House that this should be carried out. I have always felt that it would be much fairer and wiser if our income tax were based on a different system, and that a man who is simply depending on what he earns should be treated differently from a man who derives his income from investments That would make an enormous difference. The man who enjoys a spontaneous income benefits because he has not to provide for insurance and other matters which other men are bound to provide for and which is a serious tax on their incomes. I have therefore always felt that there should be a new scheme arranged. Some years ago I suggested that there should be a new scheme arranged to meet that. In those days things were comparatively quiet, and Mr. Gladstone and the hon. Member for West Monmouth and Mr. Goschen all objected to making the alteration in this very large tax, and in those days it was not needed.

Now, with the war upon us, it is not reasonable to suppose that this could be done, but it is reasonable to hope that the day is not far distant when it can be considered. It seems to me that the income tax is not a fair tax, and will not be until some great change is made with regard to these two branches of income. It certainly seems unfair that a man who trades on his brains, so to speak, should pay the same as a man whose income is spontaneous. I think it could be worked out, and some time, when we have returned to our normal condition, I hope we shall get a Chancellor of Exchequer bold enough to enter into this matter. There is another matter in connection with the income tax to which I might refer, and that is, that it used to be what its name professes it to be—a tax upon income; and it always should be made a tax on the actual income a man enjoys. But there are scores of cases where this is not the case. First of all, the tax is arrived at on the three years system, which is a very bad system and often works hardly and unfairly; but the tax often includes a number of other matters, such as machinery and patents, on which there is no real income at all. I remember the case of a company absolutely working at a considerable loss and paying income tax at the same time. Many hon. Gentlemen will recognise that that is correct. Many people pay a very much larger sum for income tax than they are earning. That should be gone into.

Then comes the question of exemption. I always regarded exemption as the bottom of the scale. Of course, theoretically, everybody should pay on their income, but the main difficulty is to get at a real estimate of the revenue of the country. It is very large, but its ramifications are so great and its complexity is so great that one hesitates to approach it. It is quite clear that if we could get a return of all the incomes it would be an easy method of collecting this tax, but at the bottom of the scale it would be impossible to collect income tax, and therefore I think exemptions are fair. But I think we went to the extreme limit some time ago. The income tax is very easily collected; it represents a large sum, but it does bear hardly on those at the bottom of the scale. In my opinion, nothing shows the growth and prosperity of this country more than the income tax returns. It seems to me a matter for congratulation that the increase of the revenue from this tax still goes on in spite of the exemptions. It is, I imagine, from the bottom of the scale there is a gradual rising up to a position of prosperity and success. This tax is of enormous benefit to the country. We used to think that a million was the proper figure to obtain from an extra penny—a little over a million a short time ago gave cause for great satisfaction. Now we have it from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it is £2,500,000. I think that, inasmuch as this tax produces this enormous sum, when the times become normal, arrangements should be made so that this tax should only be paid on actual income; and I hope I may live to see the day when a difference will be made between industrial and spontaneous incomes. When I dealt with this subject some time ago, I think I said the man at the bottom of the scale paid the heaviest income tax, and I also said that men who make a large fortune and get on tolerably well paid the smallest amount in taxation of anybody, and I still think they do; but the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for West Monmouth, has, I must say, largely set that anomaly right by the death duties which he created, the principle of which I strongly approve. There is no doubt he does there catch the man who makes a large fortune, and taxes it very heavily when the man who made it leaves this world for a better. But in spite of the death duties, which, I think, make the general incidence of taxation fairer, I think the whole incidence of taxation should be something like a knapsack, properly packed, and so adjusted to the back that it should not rub in any particular place.

The subject of cheque stamps has been referred to, and I should like to say a word upon that subject. I did say a word or two when it was first broached; I said it would throw a great deal of grit into the commercial machine. I have seen and heard a good deal since then, and I think the expression I used then was correct. I am perfectly convinced it will not bring in what the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks it will, but I also think that any differential duty would be far more injurious than the 2d. rate itself. I would sooner see a larger rate than a differential rate. I

therefore urge this one point on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I hope he will do away with this tax altogether before the Budget goes through, but if he does not, I hope he will not make a differential tax.

Then, Sir, there is the reduction of the Debt. I have always been one of those who objected to the suspension of the Sinking Fund. I think we are not paying off this enormous Debt fast enough, and I think it would be wiser if we had made a greater effort in a time of great prosperity. I have always objected to the reduction of the fixed sum, fixed by Sir Stafford Northcote, for the reduction of the Debt. I think it is a mistake. I quite agree that it would have been wiser if we had paid more of the cost of this war out of income instead of borrowing so much as we have done. I am a strong advocate for the principle that in case of war or some great emergency the public should feel largely the effect of the policy, whatever it might be. And, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer has laid a good deal of the cost of this war on general taxation, I should have agreed certainly to let the present generation, those who decided for this war, to have paid more than they have done and are doing at the present time. It is a matter of principle, and a matter to show the stability of our country. When we determine upon a line of policy, it is desirable to bring it home to the people by putting the cost on the present generation. Although I think we could not have paid all the cost of the war at present, I think we should have paid more than we have done. I hope this tax in the future will be put on the new Colonies. I should not agree to anything being laid on them now, because they cannot afford it, but I visited the country just before the war, and I think that in the future £30,000,000 or £50,000,000 could be laid upon them without crippling them, and that it would be a profitable investment for us in a few years.

Now just one word about the growing expenditure of this country. I have always been an advocate for economy in every possible way, and one of the reasons why I think we should have paid more of our Debt is because I know it is one of the few practical ways of arriving at economy. We are raising money to pay our expenditure, and we have to pay interest, and that is thrown also on the growing burden. But what is the use of talking of reducing the growing expenditure when people generally have set their minds on getting better salaries? Of course everybody would like to see everybody else get higher up in the social scale. We do not grudge it. Merely for political capital, we are always increasing the expenditure, and it is idle for us to come here and accuse the Government of increasing it when hon. Members complain that we are not spending enough. One hon. Member said we were only spending £25,000,000 a year on education. Well, I have spent a great part of my life in education. For twenty years I was at the Science and Art Department. I had the honour of receiving a letter from Mr. Forster, after the passing of the Education Act, thanking me for what I had done and saying I had materially helped him in that controversy. Therefore, in what I say, it cannot be thought that I do not advocate proper education. But can anyone contend that we really get £25,000,000 worth of good out of the money we spend on education? Can any one say that that £25,000,000, if properly applied, would not produce infinitely better results? A very much smaller sum ought to provide a much better system of education than that which we possess.

The hon. Member for Haddingtonshire says that he wishes that our expenditure may largely increase. Well, we are going to increase it. We are going to establish secondary education, and we are going to spend more money. Only on Saturday last I was looking over an institution of the Girls' Public Day School Company, with which I am connected. That Company was started for educational purposes for children who could pay a good fee. They pay on an average £15 a year. We have now thirty or forty schools, 10,000 pupils, and an income of about £150,000 a year in fees. The Company is successful; we have paid 5 per cent. dividend, and are now paying 4 per cent.; we have reserve and sinking funds; and out of the estimates voted by this House we receive over £1,000. About one-fourth of our dividend is paid by taxation. That may be a very good thing, but that is the way these increases are made. If you do that for our Company, are you going to do it for everybody else? Of course you

are, and that means an enormous increase in that way. Then there are old age pensions, and other things that are wanted, and so our expenditure goes on increasing. I agree that these matters are very important, and I am not so young and hopeful as to think that we should succeed in reducing our expenditure. I have been in this House now for nearly twenty years, but I have never seen a real reduction made in anything. The only reduction I have witnessed is one meaning that the Vote in question is not large enough. That is the way we do everything. The law does not allow us to move to increase a Vote, which is perhaps a good thing, so we do it in the way I have mentioned. Unless we take this matter very seriously in hand and apportion our total expenditure on some systematic plan, I cannot see how it can ever be reduced. We talk about the constitutional right of considering the Estimates. I should be the last to say a word against the rights of private Members to debate the Estimates, but can any sane man say that our debates tend, or are likely to tend, towards an efficient control of the expenditure of the country? It is an absurdity to suggest it. In considering the Estimates, we do not take them as a whole. An hon. Member is interested in some particular matter. That particular matter is run on the rails, and, possibly, occupies the whole of the evening. The bearing of the Estimates as a whole is not considered. We do not consider how many millions we should devote to one subject, and how many to another, and work them as best we can, as any ordinary firm would do. We depend too much on the Government. The only influences in the direction of reducing expenditure are practically those of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They very often do their work extremely well, and, in consequence, become unpopular; but unless we had some control such as that vested in the Treasury, our expenditure would become quite excessive. This is a matter in which I am keenly interested. I should like to see some efficient control over our expenditure. I do not say that the country should be run in a niggardly or cheap fashion. We are rich enough to be able to do what is right and proper, but we are not rich enough to waste money. I hope, as soon as normal times return, there will come a day when both sides will look into this matter. Let there be absolute liberality in such matters as the Navy, which I consider vital as an insurance for our existence, but let us not waste money as we do, in many ways at present. The great mass of the people—rich as some may be—are very poor, and the taxes fall very heavily on the backbone of the country—the people who really work and labour, and those who represent, as I do, and have worked amongst the poorer people, know that the bulk of them have to consider, not the shillings, but the pence; and in adjusting and arranging our expenditure so as to maintain the glorious power of the country in all directions, we ought to be careful that we do not, for our individual or fashionable fads, throw a burden upon these people which they are really hardly able to bear.

(9.9.) MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea, District): I agree with many of the weighty and judicial remarks of the hon. Member opposite with regard to the income tax and the stamp duty, and also with some of the more general conclusions with which he ended his speech. I do not intend to follow him into those matters, but simply to make one or two observations in regard to a point which has not yet been touched upon. Speaking as a representative of an industrial constituency situated in a part of the country which has been very progressive during the last two generations, I think that under existing circumstance the people of that part do not regard the Budget as one of a very controversial character except in regard to the corn duty, which we shall be able to discuss to-morrow. But last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer imposed an export duty on coal. Many of us were opposed to that duty. The right hon. Gentleman met us in many ways fairly enough. He made concessions in regard to patent fuel and existing contracts which were gratefully accepted by persons interested. I do not complain of his action in continuing the tax this year, but I rise in order that our silence may not be taken as implying assent to the propositions, which have been advanced by the Government. In introducing the Budget, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"On the whole, so far as the experience of this last year goes, there has been no ground

whatever shown for those prophecies of ruin to our great coal-mining and exporting industry, of which we heard so much last year from the representatives of that industry."

I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a little exaggerating the statements made from this side of the House. So far as I know, none of those interested and experienced in or acquainted with the coal trade ever said the industry was going to be ruined by the imposition of the tax. All that we said was that, in the long run, whenever a period of depression came, it would tend to the diminution of prices and the lowering of wages, and that, wherever our coal was exported to markets in which we had a competitor, the duty would operate as a bonus to the foreign competitor. I do not know what has been going on in other parts of the kingdom, but certainly in our district we were right in saying that that would be the effect of the duty, and our prophecies have turned out to be true. In Glamorganshire the wages are governed by a sliding scale, established many years ago. Last year in South Wales every bi-monthly audit under the seal has shown a reduction in wages amounting in the aggregate to 25 per cent. I can well understand that it might be said that our trade has been exceptional. There are, however, many other causes which have led to the lowering of wages and prices. I am not going to trouble the Committee with a detailed analysis of the causes which have led to this very important reduction, but I feel perfectly certain that hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will fully appreciate what a reduction of 25 per cent. means to the miners in Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire. I find that there has been a diminution in the total exports in regard to the whole kingdom to the different markets which are classified in the return which has been recently circulated.

The decrease of exports to West Africa, British South Africa, British North America, Ceylon and to the Indian Ocean has been general. The Return shows that to British South Africa in 1900 the total amount of coal exported from British Channel ports was 461,319 tons. In 1901 the total was 460,166 tons. That is not a large diminution, but I will explain why it is small in this instance as compared with some other places to which I might refer. The reason is that Cardiff coal has a special value and it commands a much higher price. I am informed, too, that the imposition of the tax has led to a great decrease in the exportation of inferior coal, not only from the Bristol Channel ports, but from the other ports of the United Kingdom. I am not going to labour this point but I simply wish to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was hardly justified in congratulating himself in such high terms upon the result of this coal tax as he did in his speech of Monday last. I am convinced that when the war is ended and things take their normal course it will be found that the tax has been a source of no substantial increase to the revenue and has fallen unfairly on the trade.

*(9.22.) MR. PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne): As the representative of a large commercial centre I wish to say a word or two upon the imposition of this additional tax upon cheques. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider that proposition with a view to its entire abandonment. The secret of a successful tax I have always understood to be to take the money from the pocket of the taxpayer without him realising that he is contributing to the taxation of the country. Hon. Members have stated that theoretically this is a bad principle to base taxation upon, but I hold to the view I have just expressed, that in practice it is a very successful method of raising the taxes of this country. I venture to say that this proposal to tax cheques proceeds upon a directly contrary principle, because every time a cheque is drawn—and those connected with large business centres know how constantly and how frequently that operation is undertaken—this tax is brought forcibly to mind, and the inconvenience caused is out of all proportion to the results likely to be achieved. Everything that has been said from both sides of the House goes to show that the financial results of this tax are not likely to be those which the Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to expect. I think this proposal will interfere distinctly with the collection of small accounts. Many businesses in this country have innumerable small accounts passing

through their books, and to them it is a matter of importance that they should have a ready method of collecting these very small accounts. This proposal places a premium upon the less frequent settlement of accounts. The man who has been in the habit of paying his accounts monthly, will in future be encouraged to allow his accounts to run on for three months or even longer, in order to save what may be only a small sum, but what he thinks is a sum which he should not be called upon to pay.

There is another feature to which attention has been drawn, and to which sufficient importance has not been attached, and that is the fact that this proposal must inevitably lock up a certain amount of capital, and thus withdraw capital from the banks which might be very much better made use of, and thus the free circulation of money will be interfered with. It has been well said that good government consists in making it easy for people to do right, and difficult to do wrong. I should like the House to consider for a moment how many cases of petty theft have been avoided by this system of payment by cheques, on which so large a proportion of the business of the country is conducted at the present time. Many a young fellow, after leaving school and entering upon a business life, who has had to handle large amounts for the first time, has been saved from temptation by not being placed under the necessity of handling considerable sums in cash; but if this Budget is passed in its present shape, they will be paid in petty cash. Apart from the value of the cheque system, I am sure it has removed temptation from the path of many a young fellow. For all these reasons I would urge respectfully upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider seriously whether he would not be acting wisely and well in abandoning this proposal altogether. I do not agree with everything that has been said by some hon. Members upon this side of the House, because I have always acted upon the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread, and I am not at all sure that if we cannot secure the abandonment of this tax we ought not to accept it in a more modified form. Any exemption of sums under £10 or even a smaller amount would be placing a premium upon the prompt settlement of accounts, whereas the proposition at present before the Committee really puts a premium upon the slow settlement of accounts. I will conclude by joining in the appeal addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to abandon the proposal altogether, and I venture to suggest that the great success of his loan scheme which has been announced is an additional reason why he should favourably consider the request which I have pressed upon his attention.

(9.27.) MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I do not trouble the House very often, and this is only my second speech. Although this is so, I do not ask for any special favour, but I may say that I tremble as much on delivering my second as I did on making my first speech. It is no small matter for anyone to speak in this theatre of eloquence. My wish is to have a friendly talk with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I hope I shall find he is angelic, like St. Michael of old. I do not like his Budget, and I am sure he would not like me to tell him I do like it if I do not. There are many things in his Budget which are most distasteful to me. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his last Budget he spoke up for economy, and I thought that in this Budget I should find that he was an economist. But I have not done so. I do not like the man who speaks for economy and practises prodigality. What do I find in this Budget? Last year we spent £195,000,000, chargeable to Exchequer income account. This year the Chancellor of the Exchequer asks for £193,000,000, which includes the Sinking Fund of £4,640,000, and there are sure to be some Supplementary Estimates.

When I look upon this Budget I cannot help saying that it is a retrograde and extravagant Budget. Out of this £193,000,000, I find that £40,000,000 are required for the War in South Africa up to the 31st of December next, and £18,000,000 are required for settlement charges in connection with the war. Then I find the Chancellor of the Exchequer includes in this sum £129,000,000 for Supply and Consolidated Service

Funds. This means that the amount of all the ordinary yearly income he requires is £129,000,000, as per Table 5 of Financial Statement of April 14th, 1902. Last year we spent £127,000,000, and I want to know why we should have an increase of £2,000,000, if the right hon. Gentleman is an economist. There have been great extravagances in this Budget. Many points have been brought before this House with respect to the purchase of horses, the conduct of the war, the purchase of provisions, the purchase of fodder for animals, and questions have been raised with regard to the transports. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is an economist what has he done to prevent the waste of money in connection with these purchases? The Government have wasted millions in connection with the war, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman to show what he has done to prevent this great waste of money. I wish to be candid with the right hon. Gentleman. I would remind the House that the last year when a Liberal Government was in office the ordinary yearly expenditure was £94,000,000, and there was a surplus of £6,500,000. Why has the right hon. Gentleman increased this to £129,000,000? If he will explain this, he will give great satisfaction not only to this House but to the nation at large. It is no use paying big sums of money to members of the Government unless they do their business satisfactorily. I am here in the House, and I do not get a penny. The members of the Government get large salaries.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must not discuss now the payment of Members or the payment of members of the Government. We are now discussing the Budget, and he must confine himself to that.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: I am sorry I erred, but I would always be right if I could. In this £129,000,000 Budget I find that the Army is down for an expenditure of £30,000,000. Why are we spending this big sum upon the Army? I do not object to any amount of money being spent upon the Navy, or upon bringing the war to a close, but I do say that there is no reason for spending this vast sum upon the Army, for we can never be a military nation. This increase in the cost of the Army is due to the fact that the Government have mismanaged this war and to the fear that if we did not spend these large sums upon the Army some other nation might attack us. If any Continental nation wished to attack us, it would have done so when we were being defeated by the Boers.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's remarks would be more in order on the Vote for the Army, and he must now confine himself to the Budget.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: I will now refer to the tax upon corn, wheat, and flour. [Cries of "No, no," and "Tomorrow."] I think I am in order, Mr. Jeffreys. This is a tax to which I strongly object on principle, for I hold that there should be no tax put upon the food of the people. I know it is a small tax, but it is the first step towards Protection. I hold that we should never levy taxes upon bread, which is the staff of life. If we remembered what the people suffered when there was Protection, I am sure no Member of this House would vote for this tax. Go back into the past and remember what was the condition of the working men of this country. A labourer had only 7s. a week. Remember that it was at that time, when the people had not sufficient to eat, that Richard Cobden and John Bright fought the battle for the repeal of the corn laws. John Bright, after the Home Rule split, wrote a famous letter on this subject. Some of the Tories suggested that there should be a tax put upon the food of the people. He told them plainly that they were hankering after the corn laws. He told them that they were like the dog which would always return to its vomit. It was strong language, I admit, but, at the same time, he made that statement when he was one of your own followers. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Well, he was a dissentient Liberal at that time. Now I must say a word about the Colonial Secretary. He is not present, but his son is here; and I am sure if he thinks it well he will convey my remarks to him. Before the Home Rule split, the Colonial Secretary was a strong supporter of free trade. He stated that the owners of property would tax the food

of the people in order to raise the rents of the landlords. I agree with him there. I admire the Colonial Secretary as regards his being a man of affairs. If all the members of the Government were business men like him, we should not be still at war in South Africa. I look upon the Colonial Secretary as my friend the enemy. He climbed up my Radical staircase to get to power, and when he got to the top he forgot me and my Radical friends. If I am not out of order, I should like to say that I often think——

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! We are not discussing the Vote for the Colonial Secretary. We are discussing the Budget.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: Well, I will refer now to the death duties. They have yielded £18,000,000, out of which I believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets £14,000,000. That is a great boon to him. In that respect I may say that he has reaped where he has not sown. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire introduced this tax, and it has yielded abundantly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consider whether he cannot sow in this direction, so that taxation may be equalised. With regard to the income tax, I should say that I should not object, so far as I am concerned, if 2s. had been put on the incomes of the wealthy on a graduating principle. I feel that it would have a good effect in this respect—that the wealthy would never desire war again. I do not mind how much the wealthy pay, so long as they feel that they must never have war during my lifetime. If we turn to the question of putting a twopenny tax upon cheques, I cannot help saying that I regard this as pettifogging legislation. What earthly use can there be in putting twopence on cheques and putting everyone to inconvenience? I do hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will reconsider this question, and also the advisability of withdrawing the proposal. I hope we shall not have a Party vote on this question. It is not a Party question. I take it that all of us in the House desire the well-being of the nation. I must say that I cannot quite understand why we have so much Party feeling in these votes. Personally I think that the Party system has not always been an instrument for good. I hope that when we come to vote we will vote heartily for the income tax, and that we will vote against the corn taxes and the cheque tax. Above all, I do hope that we shall all vote according to our consciences. In conclusion, I may say that we shall all be below the daisies some day. When we come to the end of our lives we shall probably repeat what was said by one great man—"So little done, so much to do."

*(9.44.) MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I quite agree with the hon. Member who has just spoken that we should all vote accordingly to our conscienc, and I mean to vote according to mine, though at the same time I should be sorry to do anything which would hamper the Government in their financial administration. I simply rise for the purpose of supporting the opposition against the tax on cheques. I have the honour of being a director of a large banking company in Sheffield, and I wish to support the argument put forward by my hon. friend the Member for the Andover Division of Hampshire, who spoke earlier on the debate of the very great inconvenience it makes to country bankers in various ways if the twopenny tax was put on cheques. I have received an important communication signed by the managers of seven of the most important banks in Sheffield, and with the indulgence of the House may I just read two paragraphs from the memorandum—

"We believe that the imposition will be a serious hindrance to business, more particularly as regards small traders. From long custom the penny stamp is taken as a matter of course, but the increased stamp will have the effect of causing people to find other ways of making payments, and we believe the duty will thus have an injurious effect upon the business of the country banks and prevent many small customers from opening current accounts."

The policy of this House ought to be to encourage thrift, and to encourage thrift we ought to put every convenience in the way of people opening banking accounts. A return has been sent to me in regard to 977 cheques taken haphazard which had

been sent from London to our country bank, and the figures are very astonishing. The number of cheques not exceeding £2 was 187, or 19 per cent.; the number not exceeding £5, 418, or 42 per cent.; the number not exceeding £10, 571, or 58 per cent.; and the number exceeding £10, 406, or 42 per cent. These figures show conclusively the very large amount of business done by payments in small cheques, and it ought to be encouraged. I appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury on another matter. The Post Office is indebted to the banks for collecting their postal orders. We collect postal orders and pay them into the Post Office in bulk. The manager of the bank of which I have the honour to be a director tells me that they collect as many as 200,000 postal orders in one month and pay them in bulk into the Post Office, giving an indemnity so that they might be paid in the first place without examination. That saves the Post Office a great deal of inconvenience, and I think some little consideration should be given to the bankers for the facilities which they give to the Post Office in this matter. The Parcel Post is to a very large extent responsible for these small cheques. Retailers used to order their goods every three or four months, now they send an order by telegram or letter asking for a single article to be sent by return per parcel post and that is paid for by small cheque. I sincerely hope the Chancellor will realise the great inconvenience it would be to all classes if this tax were insisted on. All the same I shall be loyal and vote for it if he tells us that he cannot raise the money in any other way. But I hope the war will soon be over, then he will not require it and we will all be satisfied.

*(8.49.) MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): Hon. Members during the course of the debate seem to be rather thrashing a dead horse, in this universal chorus of denunciation of the additional charge on cheques. I really cannot imagine that man, even a man, of the courage and capacity and resource of my right hon. friend can, in the face of this opposition, insist on this tax I have had representations from many tradesmen and small business men in my own constituency who have stated that its results will be really serious. They have shown by tables of the small cheques which are drawn in the course of their business that it would mean a considerable addition to the income tax they now pay. I have no doubt myself that all these considerations will be fully weighed by the right hon. Gentleman and that we shall see the result which certain Members have asked for.

I have risen because it seems to me that the accasion of this discussion tonight is rather one to deal with the general policy of the Budget, than to deal quite with so much closeness the details and with minute facts of certain taxes. The right hon. Gentleman has had a serious problem to face. He has had to face an enormous expenditure. He has faced it by drawing upon the taxpayers of the country, and also by following, I think contrary to his own instincts, and certainly contrary to his own preaching, the policy of loans. It seems to me a serious consideration that the income tax proposed is so small. I protest against the policy of continuing to pay £6 out of every £7 by means of loans. We have no right to saddle posterity with the expenditure to pay for the rapacious speculations of the hour. We have still less right to transfer the burden from the richer to the poorer classes as a loan always does. And we are by a loan imposing a direct and heavy tax on the labour of all but those employed in the manufacture of armaments, etc. I challenge the policy of the income tax most strongly because it does not involve the principle of taxation which the right hon. Gentleman should act upon. It does not involve equality of sacrifice. I wish to challenge the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the revenue of the year. He dealt with the growth and diminution of different classes of revenue. What, I should like to ask, do the facts and figures really prove in the present year? The Chancellor of the Exchequer attempted to maintain that there was no real diminution in the purchasing power of the consumer of this country, and he dwelt on the fact that his estimates have been exceeded by £523,000. But how has that excess been arrived at? I should really like the Committee to follow these figures. The

amount of excess which tea showed over the estimate was £490,000. Sugar showed the enormous excess of £1,290,000. That is £1,780,000 on these two items alone. But as the right hon. Gentleman admitted and as everyone knows, both these large excesses were entirely due to the policy of forestalments on these items. If it had not been for forstalling these things, the revenue would have been £1,250,000 less than it is. Then we have had a considerable increase in the income tax itself, £1,000,000. These figures prove that the taxable capacity of the poorer classes has been diminishing, and that the taxable capacity of the population has been among men of larger business interests and larger means. We have from day to day here, as in America, illustrations of the concentration of vast businesses under the control of small syndicates, which, by this concentration of capital, are able to earn vast fortunes for a few people. That policy has been further promoted by the present position. The war has given exceptional opportunity to earn immense profits in this way.

Now, having regard to that fact, the real increase of prosperity and taxable capacity is in this very wealthy class, and therefore, I say, the income tax is unfair and unjust in its character. You charge an income tax of one penny—which is a mere fleabite to a millionaire — to the man who makes £100,000 a year by these combinations, and you apply the same measure of income to the man earning only £700 a year. You impose income tax without ever trying to arrive at a just policy by a system of graduation, by which you would get at these millionaires, and draw upon them for a greater amount than you get by the death duties, and which is only the fair way of dealing with this tax; you are imposing this income tax without either having a graduated scale, or extending the exemptions of the poorer classes of income tax payers. There is a difference of opinion on this point. I have read articles personally expressing the view that as regards exemption it is right to go lower and lower rather than higher and higher, and that you should thus make the poor man also pay towards the expenditure of the country, but I venture to say that the poorer classes have already, even before the last two or three Budgets, been paying a larger proportion towards the expenditure of the country than was their share. In three successive Budgets the right hon. Gentleman, in my opinion, has been unfair in trying to secure so-called equality of direct and indirect taxation, and in the present Budget that unfairness has become a scandal. This Budget will vastly increase the disproportion which in each previous Budget had been brought about under the pretence of equality between indirect and direct taxation. In this connection I would draw attention to the fact that the poorer taxpayers constitute a large majority of the ratepayers of this country, and that with regard to rates they are paying rates in larger proportion to their position than the large income taxpayers. How unjust it is, then, not to consider claims to exemption of these classes, when you are by your Education Bill proposing to place an enormous burden on the rates, perhaps £2,500,000 a year, which will throw a larger and more unjust proportion of public expenditure on this very class of taxpayers than they now pay.

Now with regard to the bread tax, several speakers have already dealt in detail with the corn duty and the tax upon flour, and I do not intend to touch upon the subject further than to show how very unfair the incidence of this tax is, if you consider it in the form of an income tax on the poorer classes of the community. Is there any equality of circumstances here? It has been urged again and again that the poorer class of taxpayers in this country have not felt the sugar tax. That is true, but the reason is that the glut of sugar in the markets has kept the prices down, and you know perfectly well that if it had not been for your tax upon sugar these poor people would have been just so much the better off, and though they may not see it, they do pay this tax, and are therefore so much the worse off. This bread tax will fall most heavily upon the poorest wage earners of the country. The proportion of income from bread varies from over one third among the poorest to a tenth or

twelfth among the larger wage earners. If you take the agricultural labourer earning £36 a year, his bread and flour and other articles which come under this duty represent one third of his income. It has been said that the duty will represent 4 per cent. on the value of these articles. I ask the Committee to follow me on this point. Accept the figure of 4 per cent., you say that that is a trifle that will not be felt. What is the position then of the agricultural labourer, who earns £36 a year and spends £12 on these commodities? The tax in that case works out — if taken as income tax on his earnings— as a tax of 3¼d. in the £. That is a grave addition to the serious contribution which the wage earners have been in previous years called upon to make in the increase of the duty on tea and sugar, and on tobacco and beer, to the expenditure of the country. Assume that it is 4 per cent., and that it is calculated to amount to a fraction of a penny. You are asking these men to pay an enormous proportion of that tax. But this is not all The man will be far worse off. The price of corn and flour has already risen to double the du y, and the baker in that case will try to transfer the burden of the duty to the consumer. The consumer will have to pay, not the duty, but four times the duty. The result will be this—that whereas the tax is only one-eighth of a penny, the minimum addition to the price that a baker can possibly make is one halfpenny a loaf. And in this transaction you have the absurd result that the Chancellor of the Exchequer only receives one-eighth of a penny, while three-eighths of a penny will go to the middle-man, and that the poor man will be paying not 3¼d in the £ on his income, but 13d. in the £, if this tax is carried out under economic conditions, for which you cannot blame either the seller of the flour or the baker. Now I just wish to say one word on the whole policy of this transaction. We know very well what this means. It means Protection, and Protection alone. We know perfectly well where this money is going, and that it is going to swell the rents of agricultural land. The corn-growing land of this country is some 9,000,000 acres, and on those 9,000,000 acres there will be an addition of profit resulting from this tax averaging 3s. an acre. all round. That will not go into the pockets of the farmer; sooner or later it will find its way into the landlords' pocket, and it will become a subsidy of £1,300,000 or £1,500,000 to them. It is another dole to the landlords. I denounce this policy. I think it is grossly unfair to start this policy, which is an income that graduated not upwards but downwards so as to fall with the most crushing severity on the very poorest classes.

But, Mr. Speaker, I rose rather to challenge the whole of the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman. We are hoping for a rapid conclusion of peace, and we hope this Budget may be the last step, the culminating point of the financial policy of this Government. So far as I have examined them, the Budgets of this Ministry are Budgets marked with one policy from end to end. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has accustomed us to loans in order that the eye of the country may be directed away from the gulf into which it is plunging. He has, I know, repeatedly dwelt on the fact that our expenditure was increasing vastly faster than the growth of population, or the growth of our resources; but, reviewing the course of all these Budgets from the year 1896 onward, they remind me of nothing so clearly as that which occurred a few years ago in the United States, after the Civil War. There we had vast funds pouring into the Treasury of Washington which the American Government did not know what to do with so, in order to get rid of that money, they raised the pensions of those that fought in the war and devised other means solely for the purpose of using up that money. This policy was deliberately adopted in order to keep up the Protective Tariff there. During the last seven years the same policy has been apparent here. We have seen year by year this reckless expenditure of public money growing faster and faster; and. while I give the right hon. Gentleman the fullest credit for honesty and sincerity in his professed wish for economy, and his repeated warnings that perseverance in this policy of reckless expenditure must bring disaster upon

the country. The right hon. Gentleman may have been an unwilling instrument in bringing about these disastrous results, but I ask the Committee whether they do not see in this reckless growth of expenditure an artificial creation of wants and needs, which have to be fed in order that the basis of indirect taxation shall be gradually extended and the duties gradually increased. You have increased the duty on tea and you have taxed sugar, and at last you have reached that point at which an excuse can be made for re-enacting those hateful and detestable corn laws which Sir Robert Peel had the glory of clearing away from the country, and thus laying the corner-stone of its happiness and prosperity.

*(10.10.) MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said he regarded the agitation against the coal tax, so far as South Wales was concerned, as entirely with the hope of injuring the Government, and precisely of the same character as that now being organised at Manchester and elsewhere to protest against the grain duties. There was no more reality about the one than the other. But although South Wales had not suffered, he thought the North Country, and especially Scotland, were not quite in the same position. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had very wisely made certain concessions with regard to small coal and coal of low value; but he did not think the concessions went quite far enough with regard to the 6s. limit of exemption. This he thought should apply to the price not at the pit's mouth, but at the ports of shipment. Such a concession would tend to increase trade, and be for the benefit of the country. He found himself quite unable to support the Chancellor of the Exchequer's income tax proposals, and thought he should rather get the money by taxing beetroot sugar and other imported manufactures which came into competition with our industries. The principle of an income tax, was, he thought, right enough in so far as it meant taxing profits yielded by the investments of wealthy people, but unfortunately it seemed impossible to apply that principle with any degree of fairness. Investments in Great Britain and Ireland were easily reached, and mulcted to the last farthing in respect of income tax. Not so investments abroad. In the case of every railway company in this country, of nearly every great steamship company, of many manufacturing companies, and of most British or Irish enterprises of any considerable magnitude, the company paid the income tax; and deducted the amount from the dividends. Nothing of this kind could be done as regards the profits derived from investments abroad. We were therefore handicapping our own business, and were protecting the foreigner by the extent to which the profits upon investments in competing industries abroad escaped payment of income tax; and this was what we called Free Trade! Our Foreign investments were, admittedly, enormous; but to what extent the Chancellor of the Exchequer succeeded in collecting income tax upon them was a very open question. He had no means of getting at the facts with regard to unregistered Foreign securities, coupons payable to bearer, and the like; and as checking of accounts was impossible in respect of unrecorded transactions, it was not unreasonable to suppose there might be considerable leakage. Foreign investors were only human; and, perhaps, it was not too much to say that few of them paid any more income tax than they could help. We might feel quite sure, however, that they were all of them ardent admirers of our fiscal system, and firm believers in the principles of Free Trade. He expected no help from them tonight. He thought there was something reasonable in the view that the rich man who derived his wealth from realised investments, whether in this country or abroad, should pay income tax; and that he ought to contribute to the necessities of the State some share of his profits, and especially of such profits as he had done nothing to earn. But what of the man or the woman who was not rich—who had no investments of any magnitude—whose income was dependent upon daily toil, and upon the continuance of health and strength, without which no income could be earned? Such people, he thought, should not pay income tax at all; and yet we were told that the majority of income tax payers were of this class, and that their average income did not exceed £250 a year. It was abundantly clear that the lawyer, the

doctor, the clergyman, the schoolmaster, the shopkeeper, the mercantile clerk, or anybody who had to earn his daily bread—whose income was precarious, or might disappear altogether if he were to fall into ill health—was in a very different position from the rich man who derived his income from investments. The income tax, as at present levied, was most unfair. It was largely a tax upon the brains of those workers who had no investments, and who were obliged to earn their living. He declined to vote for any increase in the income tax; but, on the contrary, thought he made out a case strong enough to justify his demand for a reduction, and also for an alteration in the mode of assessment; but he hoped it might be possible before long to sweep away this iniquitous impost altogether, so far as concerned the taxation of our own industries, and the taxation of the earnings of the professional and trading classes. He thought the liability of investors to pay income tax upon profits earned abroad might well be continued; but that those who traded in this country, and who put their money into British industries, should be allowed to go free. At present it was rather the other way about. He disliked the death duties, as at present levied, almost as much as the income tax. By one we robbed the living, and by the other we sought to rob the dead. A man saved money and died. Then stepped in Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and took no inconsiderable share of the property which ought to go to the widow and children. It was no answer to say that large estates paid much and that small estates paid little, because in each case the wrong was the same. The small estate might be as much to the poor man as the large estate to the rich one; and the widow and the orphans who had lost their bread-winner might perhaps suffer more from the payment of a few pounds in death-duties than the heirs of the rich man whose investments were reckoned by millions.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! There is no Resolution before the House with regard to death duties.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER said if he was precluded from saying more upon that matter he would only say he much disliked the income tax as it was at present administered, and could not support it being further increased.

*(10.25.) MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I have the highest respect for the financial statements made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I believe that he, equally with other Members of the House, desires that the taxation of the country should proceed on the only equitable principle of taxation—namely, that every man should be taxed according to his ability to pay. The question is how far the present Budget, and especially the mode of assessing and levying the income tax which we are specially considering to-night, fulfils the condition of sound finance which I have stated. I desire to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman tonight especially to the mode of assessing the profits made in different businesses. When I look into this Budget I find that all mines are taxed for income tax on their profits of the preceding five years, and that tradesmen's and other businesses are assessed on the three year profits, whilst gas works, railways, iron works, and other businesses are assessed on the profits of the preceding year only. Now, I submit that these variations in the assessment lead to unfair inequalities. Take the case of the coal trade. I venture to say the cheapest working collieries this year will not earn a profit of more than one quarter of the average of five years profit—and so instead of paying a tax of 1s. 3d. they will have to pay out of this year's profits an income tax of 5s. But this is not the case in many other trades where the income is fixed and does not vary. In the coal trade you not only have to pay this income tax on profits, but also on capital. Money invested in collieries is largely expended in sinking shafts and erecting engine houses, and in other ways, which when the coal is extracted are practically of no value.

Therefore, it is necessary that during the life of the colliery we should set aside redemption money sufficient to recoup ourselves the capital outlay in sinking the pits and opening the colliery. This is not the case in regard to many other

businesses. There the capital remains intact, and the income tax is paid merely on the profits. But in the case of a colliery, the Inland Revenue authorities will not allow to be written off the profits the redemption which from year to year it is necessary to set aside to recoup the capital outlay which will be valueless on the exhaustion of the coal. In this way it is clear that collieries this year will suffer very heavily as compared with other trades. Why we should be assessed on the average of five years while iron works are assessed on the preceding year, it is difficult to understand. It cannot be said that the two trades are dissimilar in their results. Almost invariably a period of inflation in the coal trade is accompanied by a period of inflation in the iron trade, and *vice versa*. It will therefore be obvious that this different method of dealing with and assessing profits leads to the imposition of disproportionate burdens as between various classes of property. It may be said that in the year 1899, which was a good year in the coal trade, we received a great advantage in being assessed on the profits of the preceding five years. That is perfectly true, and over an average of years it would act fairly if the income tax remained at one uniform amount. But, unfortunately for the coal owners, the income tax which we paid in 1899 on a less amount than our profits in that year actually were. was at the rate of 8d. in the £, while this year, when we have to pay on a much larger amount than our profits will turn out to be, the tax is at the rate of 1s. 3d. We shall therefore pay this year much in excess of the amount we saved three years ago. I would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether some means could not be devised by which in the future every concern should pay upon the actual income of the year, whatever the amount of the tax might be. By the Act of 1842 it was directed that the principle I have described should be applied to the different trades, for it was provided that if the profits in any year turned out to be less than the amount at which they had been so assessed, the return of the amount of income tax paid in excess of the sum actually due in respect of the profits of the year could be claimed. Unfortunately, an Act was afterwards passed under which our only chance of getting any return or rebate is by taking the actual profits of the year, adding to them the profits of the two preceding years, and taking the average of the three. I therefore appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with his known sense of justice and his strong desire to see the burden of taxation equitably distributed, to take this question into his consideration, and endeavour to find some solution of the problem by which all classes of property shall pay each year on the actual profits received.

Another question to which I desire to refer is the proposed re-imposition of the 1s. coal tax. The right hon. Gentleman, in introducing his Budget, said that—

> "On the whole, so far as the experience of the year went, there had been nothing to justify the prophecies of evil which they heard last year from the representatives of the coal industry."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is in order in discussing the income tax on collieries, but with regard to the 1s. duty on coal, that is not the subject of a Resolution of the Budget; that is imposed by an Act of Parliament of last year.

* MR. JOSEPH WALTON: But it is in the Budget. I have had information conveyed to me from the coal owners of South Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland, showing how this tax has operated, and I desired to show that that information does not agree with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman to which I have referred.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are now in Committee on certain Resolutions of the Budget; the coal tax is not the subject of one of those Resolutions, therefore the hon. Member will have to find another opportunity.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): On a point of order, Sir. This, I understand, is a general discussion on the Budget as a whole, not merely on the Resolutions. It would be perfectly in order to propose the repeal of the coal tax.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, this is not a general debate on the Budget; this is a general debate on the Resolutions of the Budget.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I apologise if I have been out of order in entering upon this subject, but I was led into it by Members on the other side being allowed to approve most warmly of the tax, and I naturally thought I was perfectly in order in referring to the same subject. I presume, however, that I shall have an opportunity of placing this information before the right hon. Gentleman on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill, and I will reserve my further remarks until then.

*(10.45.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I am sure we should be glad, on the Second Reading of the Bill, to hear the information which my hon. friend is in such a good position to offer as to the success of the export duty on coal which we challenged last year. I do not desire to detain the House long tonight, because the most important question in the Budget is that which we shall be able to discuss tomorrow. I think that the right hon. Gentleman, with all the respect which we entertain for him on both sides of the House, must by this time have become aware that his Budget is not a popular Budget. Various persons in this House and out of this House, for one reason or another, have condemned every particular proposal in that Budget. I remember that Sir Robert Peel, speaking of a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that there was no more sympathetic subject than a good man struggling with adversity, and, in a bottomless pit of deficiency, angling for a Budget. The deficiency of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer is more unfathomable than that of any of the Budgets of former times. He has had to angle for his Budget, and time after time he has brought up fish of a very unpalatable character. It is not so much the fault of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as of the situation in which we find ourselves. War is the producer of bad finance. It has always been so; and, when you have had a succession of deficiences amounting to about £40,000,000 year after year, you have to go to the very dregs of the resources of your taxation. That is the cause of the proposals which we have seen in this Budget, and nothing but the exhaustion of your financial resources would have produced what I may call the insignificant tax upon cheques and the pernicious tax upon corn. There is no greater proof of the exhaustion of your resources produced by this war than that a man like the present Chancellor of the Exchequer should have been reduced to making such proposals. This war has shown many things in the way of exhaustion. As regards your men, you have pretty well exhausted your resources there. ["No."] Why, you have had to depend on your Colonies. That was not one of the former resources of this country, you have not only had to seek aid from the Colonies, but you have had to deplete your forces in India.

But when you come to taxation, what is the condition of things? You have had to throw upon posterity four-fifths or three-fourths of the burden, and you complain of the taxes—and you have reason to complain of them—by which you are to defray one-fifth or one-fourth of the burden which has now fallen upon you. And this cannot be denied, that each Budget, from a financial point of view, has been worse than that which preceded it; and if, unhappily, this war is to continue, will not the Budget of next year be worse than that of this year? What are the resources which are left to you? What are the sources of taxation on which you can depend? If you possess them, why did you not take this year? And when you come to them, I suppose they will be worse than those which you propose now. That is a very serious condition for the country to find itself in. What have you come to?—a tax on corn. I am not going into that tonight; I merely refer to it in passing. You may call it what you like—a registration duty or anything else—but it is a tax on the irreducible minimum of the subsistence of the people. That is a fact which you cannot alter, and to that you have come in the third year of the war.

These are the results—and serious results they are—of this war. They have brought you within sight of conscription, and they are bringing you within view of protection. These are among what the doctors call the *sequelæ* of the war. There have been people in this House who have deliberately argued

for conscription; and amidst the resonant cheers of the hon. Member for Central Sheffield, the first parallels have been opened which are to reduce the fortress of free trade. That is the financial prospect held before us. It is all very well to say that this has no bearing on Protection. Is that the interpretation which is put upon your policy by all the nations of the world? The foreign Press on this subject, and the expression of foreign opinion, have put that interpretation upon it. One of my hon. friends made an observation which was full of force and truth, when he said—

"If you put one shilling on corn, it is very easy to put on another shilling and to say that that will not affect the price of bread. And then you put on another shilling, when you want more money, until you pile up a large sum operating as a protective duty on corn."

These are the very serious matters opened by the financial position in which we find ourselves, and to the acceptance of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has found himself reduced. I fear there are people in this country, and even in this House, who are not sorry that we should be driven to such an issue as that, and that the absolute difficulty of the demand made upon us by the expenditure of this country should drive the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the country into measures which they would be the first to condemn. This has always been the case with war. What was the origin of that intolerable, oppressive, injurious state of finance in the country at the beginning of the last century—the great French War? The result of the war then was that the income tax was 2s., and you had every article which man could use, either for his subsistence, for his comfort, or for the decency of living, taxed. Every man who deals with questions of this kind ought to study the conditions of the English people under finance of that character. I venture to say that for the thirty years from 1815 to 1845 the working classes of this country were in a worse condition than they had ever occupied in the history of this nation. These things are forgotten, but they ought to be remembered when you are engaged in increasing expenditure, both from the war and from the spirit which is bred by the war. When you have enormous expenditure you have the commencement of oppressive taxes growing worse and worse, and, in presence of a deficit of 40 millions, you have a Member of this House saying that he wants to get rid of the income tax, and if he had been in order he would have disposed of the death duties. The objection is to taxing the dead; but if you only taxed the dead there would be no one to complain. That disposes at once of more than £50,000,000 of taxation; and what does the hon. Gentleman imagine he is going to put in the place of it? I desire to call attention to this, because my hon. friend the Member for Haddingtonshire said that we were only at the beginning of the increase of expenditure. I must say that the Government have a proposal before us this session which would indeed diminish taxation as regards the Exchequer, because they are going to throw a great portion of the cost of education on the rates. ["No."] Whether that will give more satisfaction I do not know; at all events, the County Councils are to raise the rates to defray expenses which are now paid by voluntary subscriptions, and to meet expenditure which the voluntary subscriptions are no longer supplying. My hon. friend is quite right in saying that in the present spirit and temper of the public mind it is obvious that we have before us a danger of this reckless expenditure spreading, and that the shadows seem to lengthen as we go. Therefore, bad as we consider this Budget, you have worse to follow it before you have anything better.

There is one question I should like to ask the Chancellor of the exchequer. It was raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. Every one hopes that we are going soon to have peace. We are at the beginning of the financial year, and supposing that we do have peace, what is the Chancellor of the Exchequer going to do with the money he is about to raise by this taxation and by the loan he has borrowed of £32,000,000? I think we ought to have clear information on that point. We shall not be in the position we were in last year, when it was said we had no more than would meet the ordinary expenditure. We should have more; we may have a great deal more, and I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to tell us what under those circumstances he will do with the money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has only at present made a case for the war expenditure. He speaks of some extra £18,000,000, but for which he has not yet made any proposal. What

is to become of the residuary sum when the peace is made? I suppose we should have new Estimates as to what is necessary for the carrying on of the war as long as it is carried on, and for what may be necessary to bring back the troops. The right hon. Gentleman rather indicated that the money was to be expended, or might be expended, on other objects that were not war purposes. My opinion is that that would be entirely an improper proceeding. It would be unconstitutional; it would not be giving that control which Parliament ought to have over money which it raises by loans or by taxation; it would be a general vote of credit which ought not to be given without some explanation of the objects to which it was to be devoted. I would venture to say that in the circumstances the most proper method of dealing with any residuary sum which was not wanted for the immediate purposes of winding up the war would be to devote it to the reduction of the debt you have contracted. You are in the position now—and a very bad financial position it is—of having an enormous unfunded debt. I think it is something like £67,000,000, and the disadvantage of this position is that when the time comes at which you have to pay the debt off you may have a very bad money market and a very unfavourable condition of things to deal with. If we have borrowed more money than we want, for Heaven's sake let us pay it off. If we have raised more taxation than we want, let the people be relieved from the liability to these taxes, but let us come to a clear understanding in this matter, and before these proposals pass into law revise our situation, supposing we shall be happy enough to see the prospect of peace realised within some months. That is a matter upon which I hope we shall have a satisfactory statement from the right hon. Gentleman. I press this because the right hon. Gentleman mentioned the necessity of borrowing a sum of money to meet the deficiency of revenue in the early quarters of the year. He asked for £10,000,000 for that purpose last year; he asked for £10,000,000 as a margin for the war. As is usually the case in war, the margin was swallowed up, but not only was that margin swallowed up, but the £10,000,000 granted to meet the deficiency. I remember asking the right hon. Gentleman about it at the time, and he said—

"Of course, when we get our revenue that will be used for the purpose of paying off temporary debt."

But it was not used for that purpose. £6,000,000 of it went to the war, and the £4,000,000 which he is going to take to meet his deficit this year is only the residue of that £10,000,000, which ought to have been repaid as soon as he got his revenue in the first quarter of the year. I hope, therefore, that we shall have some very distinct understanding as to what is to be done with any margin that may arise. If we have peace, I do hope that there will be something, at all events, to go in reduction of this enormous debt which is accumulating.

With regard to the subjects which have come up for discussion tonight, I do not propose to trouble the House at any length. The Resolution before the House is the income tax, and I heartily agree with what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said—namely, that the life preserver of a Chancellor of the Exchequer in a storm is mainly the income tax. It is wonderful what, under all difficulties and in all circumstances, has been the produce of that tax. I do not propose to go into the objections that have been taken to that tax. They have been taken ever since the tax was established some sixty years ago. The question of distinguishing between professional incomes and incomes derived from what are regarded as more permanent investments was dealt with, and, I think, for any one who has studied the principles of finance, finally disposed of by Mr. Gladstone in his Budget speech in 1853. If anybody is disturbed in his mind upon that subject, I would venture to refer him to a study of that masterpiece of finance. There is another subject which commends itself to some people, and that is the graduation of the income tax. It was referred to by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Haddington. The objection to that is not so much in principle—I have never objected to the principle of a graduated income tax—but it really is impossible in the matter of administration. You cannot have a graduated income tax unless you call upon everybody to declare the whole of their income, and that is to most people an extremely disagreeable thing. It would, in my

opinion, make the income tax so unpopular that it could not be maintained. One of the great merits of the method of collection now is, that to a great degree, not in all classes, but in a great portion of the income tax paying people, the collection is automatic; and since it became automatic, and did not depend on the declaration of the individual, it has become very much more productive, for reasons which it is not difficult to discover. It would be, I believe, absolutely impossible to collect the income tax upon the principle of graduation, if you departed from the present automatic collection, by which you get the tax at its source. That is really the practical difficulty which, in my opinion, makes a graduated income tax administratively impossible. We cannot help feeling some satisfaction that in all these considerable demands this great engine of finance has proved so productive, and has demonstrated the enormous wealth and resources of this country. I do not say that there may not be some improvements made There has been a sort of graduation in the abatements made on the income tax. There is the exemption of everybody whose income is under £160, and there are abatements on incomes up to £700 a year. That has been a successful, and I think a just expedient. I would strongly advise the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and anybody who is responsible for the finances of this country, not to disorganise that great engine on which alone you can depend to meet the enormous expenditure for which this country is liable.

As to the tax upon cheques, I cannot myself treat that as a subject of consummate importance. I think it is an unfortunate proposal, and I should strongly recommend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to dispense with it. I remember very well when I consulted Mr. Gladstone upon the subject of stamps. I said—

"Do not you think we could get something out of stamps?"

He said—

"Ah! Stamps are very ticklish things, and we should be very careful how we meddle with them. The habits of the people are so wedded to particular forms that you do a great deal more harm than good, and get a great deal less money, by tampering with them than by leaving them alone."

We had some very salutary warnings too, in the match tax and the adhesive stamp of Mr. Goschen, which yielded a very small income and produced great irritation in the City. I confess that I think this is a most injudicious and ununnecessary interference with the habits of the people; and for my part I should hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not endeavour to introduce any modifications into his proposal. I do not think you can put a higher stamp on higher cheques and different stamps on lower cheques. I believe that the sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer will collect by this tax is very problematical, and I should hope he may see his way to dispense with it altogether.

The main feature of this Budget is, of course, the corn tax. I will not go into that tonight, because it is to be fully debated tomorrow; but I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer must already have begun to be convinced by the views expressed, as freely and strongly on his side of the House as on this, that a more unfortunate proposal in the way of indirect taxation could not possibly be made. It is a proposal, not only bad in itself, but bad in the consequences with which it is fraught, and the suspicions which it naturally arouses; and I am am perfectly certain that it is a tax which ought to be resisted, and which will be resisted, with all the power, I will not say of one Party, but really with all the power of conviction of all Parties in the country. The right hon. Gentleman has argued that it does not signify, that it will never affect the price of bread. But that argument of the right hon. Gentleman is not a very consistent one, for he said he wanted to put on a tax which would make all classes in the community contribute towards the war for which they were enthusiastic. But, having said that this was a tax which would enable all classes to contribute, he proceeded to prove that it would not be felt on the price. I will not delay the Committee any longer, because I am quite sure we shall be extremely glad to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who always deals with the House so frankly, what qualifications he is prepared to make in consequence of what he has learned in this House and out of it since he contributed his Budget

*(11.15.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The Resolution before the Committee is the re-imposition of the income tax, with the addition of 1d. in the pound. Before I enter on the various topics that have been raised, I will make a few observations on the criticisms which hon. Members have made on that particular subject. It has been suggested by the hon. Member for Haddington and others that certain changes should be made in the mode of the assessment of the income tax which would be to the public advantage, as making the assessment of the tax fairer and also yielding a larger revenue. Well, I do not know whether there is anything in the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer that makes one somewhat timid in attempting to alter the organisation of the income tax, but I was glad to observe from the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that I am not the only person in this House who looks with considerable suspicion upon these suggestions for altering the mode of levying the tax. It is all very well to talk about graduating the income tax, but I will venture to say you cannot do it consistently with the system under which the income tax is levied in this country, which is the only system which has ever yet succeeded anywhere. As long as you have a very large proportion of your income tax levied at the source, long before the income reaches the person to whom it belongs, so long will it be impossible to graduate the income tax; and if you once depart from that admirable system, you will then be driven to an inquisition into the private means of individuals which has made the income tax odious wherever it has been attempted, and, what is more important to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which has reduced its yield. Therefore I cannot hold out any hope that, as long as I am Chancellor of the Exchequer, an attempt will be made to graduate the income tax.

Then my hon. friend the Member for the Kirkdale Division asks that the tax should be repealed altogether upon incomes derived from personal exertion—he asks that a lawyer, for example, earning, as I hope many lawyers earn, £20,000 a year, shall pay nothing on that income, while the widow and the orphan drawing an income of £50 a year from the funds should be charged with income tax. Sir, the proposition is intolerable. What I think it was right to do with regard to correcting the incidence of the income tax on precarious incomes was practically done by the Finance Act of 1894; the increased death duties remedied any unfairness that previously existed, and I do not think that in that respect any real improvement could be made in our present system. Of course there are matters of minor importance. The hon. Member opposite, who is interested in coal mines, raised a question of the average number of years on which the income of a coal owner should be calculated. He admitted, and I confess I thought while he was speaking, that the average of five years worked with great profit to coal owners in the year 1900. But, however that may be, these are matters of detail, and if statements on such points as those are placed before me I will examine them and see if any alterations can be made in the present system which would conduce to a fairer yearly assessment of the income tax. But as far as I am acquainted with the matter I think this system of averages has been adopted, not so much with regard to the Exchequer, as with regard to the persons who pay the tax, and I doubt myself if it would be to the advantage of the taxpaying public to make any material modification in that matter. However, I am quite ready to examine the question and see if any change can be made. Then I come to the question of the stamp duty on cheques. I am astonished at the importance that is attached to this. I perhaps did not realise it, and I have already undertaken not only to inquire into the matter, but to see what I can do to remedy the objections that have been made to this increased duty. [AN HON. MEMBER: Abolish it altogether.] Wait a moment. I understand that the position is this. It is thought that the duty would be unduly heavy on traders and those who use many small cheques in the way of business. If it were so of course it would work in one of two ways. It would either induce them to draw fewer cheques than they have done, which would not be to my advantage, because it would reduce my revenue, or it would be an exceptionally heavy burden upon them

as compared with the taxation which they ought to bear. I feel that that is a fair argument, and one which I must endeavour to meet with regard to the tax. Then there is another matter. It is argued by bankers, and I think reasonably, that it would be quite intolerable as a matter of business to have more than one stamp, so that smaller cheques would have a different stamp from those which were of a higher value. I have to endeavour to meet both those objections to the tax. I have a scheme under my consideration which I hope may do it, but it is not yet in such a perfect shape that I am able to mention it to the Committee, but I think I see my way to maintain the tax and to meet both those objections.

I next come to the corn duty. For the reason which the right hon. Gentleman and other Members of the Committee have already stated, I do not propose to enter upon that subject tonight, but I have heard with astonishment some of the speeches which have been made in this Committee tonight with regard to that tax. I have been accused of reversing the policy of Sir Robert Peel. I am maintaining the policy of Sir Robert Peel. It is all very well for the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire to speak as he did, but Sir Robert Peel deliberately maintained this shilling duty upon corn, and that is all I am proposing to re-enact. I am accused of bringing back protection. The idea of protection with a 3d. duty per cwt. on corn and a 5d. duty per cwt. on flour is absurd. It is all very well to talk about a certain number of cases in which on the announcement of the duty the price of corn or flour may have been raised, and where bakers have taken advantage of the opportunity to do what they evidently contemplated before. I have had the advantage of reading some of the trade journals on the subject of the increase, and I see that the rise in the price of bread in such districts would, by the bakers' own admission, be considerably higher than the increase in the duty would warrant. Hon. Members refer to these things as if they were not temporary effects, and as if they would permanently continue. They will not continue a week or a month longer than there is any real change in the price of corn or flour. Just the same thing was said and just the same thing was done a year ago when I imposed a duty on sugar. Very soon the ordinary conditions of the trade re-asserted themselves, and now we see that the increase in the duty on sugar has not led to an increase of more than half the amount in price. To argue from anything that has happened as if it would result in a permanent increase in the price of corn, flour, or bread, is to my mind an absurdity.

The right hon. Gentleman has characterised this as not a popular Budget. I never expected that it would be. I have not been in the habit lately of producing popular Budgets. I do not think it is my fault. When the expenditure of the country increases owing to a war which the country approves of additional taxation has to be found, and a Budget involving additional taxation is not likely to be a popular Budget. When people have to pay the bill, the bill is never popular. But I believe the country at large is willing to pay the bill. Whatever may be said—and no doubt something may be said—by those who are interested from one point of view or the other in the particular articles which it is proposed to tax, or the particular tax which it is proposed to levy, I believe the country as a whole will feel that in time of war it is necessary to increase our taxation. That has been a subject of controversy tonight. The hon. Member for the Camlachie Division boldly said that in his opinion there was no necessity for increased taxation this year at all; that we ought to have borrowed anything we wanted. I differ entirely from that proposition. I will never, while I am Chancellor of the Exchequer, refrain in time of war from increasing taxation in order to provide part of the money. Of course the particular circumstances of the moment may be put forward. The hon. Member for King's Lynn has suggested that in the present circumstances we ought to hesitate about increasing taxation. It is all very well to talk in that way. But this I will tell the Committee, that whatever happens, assuming that all these conferences that are now going on in South Africa end in peace—and I will venture to say that nothing can

be more premature than the rumours that have appeared in the Press on the subject. There must still be an infinitely larger expenditure in the course of the year before us than will be defrayed by the taxation which I propose, including the increased taxation which I ask the Committee to sanction. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire asked what will happen if we do not require all that I propose to raise by taxation and by loan for the purposes of the war, or purposes connected with the war. I have already explained that the latter head covers very large expenditure. The purposes of the war include not only the military operations, but all the payments for gratuities, the payments on disembodiment of the troops, for transport and return of the troops, and matters of that sort, which were not included in the original Estimate of the Secretary of State for War, but which will have to be defrayed out of the Vote which he proposed for the purpose of continuing the war. And then I also said there were further expenses connected with compensation to loyalists, compensation for various purposes in South Africa, for re-settlement, relief, for re-stocking and rebuilding farms and matters of that kind, for all of which the money will have to be found, and for which I should hope the money to be found might be lent by us to the Colonies affected.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: There will be Estimates presented, I presume?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Obviously, Sir. The assent of Parliament will be asked in the ordinary way by Estimates, or Bills placed before Parliament for that purpose. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he hoped that if there was anything left from the loan it would be devoted to paying off debt. Certainly, Sir; that will be my first desire. We have a very considerable sum of unfunded debt—thirteen millions of Treasury Bills, and I think twenty-four millions of Exchequer Bonds, all of which could be paid off without the least practical difficulty to the extent of any surplus that might be derived from the loan which the House sanctioned the other day. Therefore, I hope I have shown to the Committee that in no case will the taxation we are now asking the Committee to vote be not required for the services of the year, nor can the loan be expended in any way that is not approved. I now turn to the suggestion made in the course of the debate with regard to the general circumstances of the Budget. I have been accused of not raising enough by taxation for the service of the year and raising too much by loan. As a matter of fact, I have proposed to raise by taxation a very large sum for the service of the war beyond the necessary services of the ordinary Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said we were throwing four-fifths of the cost of the war on posterity.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Three-fourths.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There is a difference between four fifths and three-fourths.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman promised the figures, but we have not yet had them.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that, according to our Estimates, I anticipate that no less than £28,416,000 will be devoted from the revenue to the purposes of the war, including, of course, the sum saved by the suspension of the Sinking Fund. The right hon. Gentleman and I differ upon that latter point. The Sinking Fund is raised by revenue, and is devoted by law to the purpose of paying off the ordinary debt of the country; yet when Parliament sanctions the suspension of that process, and allows it to be devoted to the purpose of the expenditure of the year, the sum so devoted is none the less derived from the taxation of the country.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is incresing the debt by robbing it of what should be paid to it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir, it is not increasing the debt. It is delaying paying off the debt, and that is a very different matter, as I think the right hon. Gentleman will find if he consults his bankers upon the subject. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington made an interesting speech, in which he admitted that there must be an increase in the expenditure of the country, and said he did not approve of increasing indirect taxation. He suggested certain alterations in the income tax, to which I have already alluded, and in which I am afraid I disagree with him. But he dwelt much on the increase of the wealth of the country and its capacity to bear taxation. The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly right; there has been great increase in the wealth of the country; but he forgot in his argument that that increase in the wealth of the country has been by no means confined to those persons only who pay income tax. That is really the crux of the situation. The hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn suggested that the limit of income tax should be lowered from £160 to £100, or something of that kind. That has been often suggested; and what is the obstacle in the way? The obstacle is this—that when you reduce the income tax point, so to speak, you also largely increase the difficulty and expense of collection; and the cheapest way to collect taxation from the classes below the present income tax level is, in my belief, by indirect taxation. Therefore I am absolutely convinced of this—that, in order to provide for the increased expenditure which the hon. and learned Gentleman contemplates in the future, it is absolutely necessary to increase indirect taxation. That is the origin of the proposals I made last year, and of the proposals I have made in the present Budget.

I am not going to enter into the merits of the corn duty tonight, but what are the only practical alternatives which have been suggested? It is said, put fourpence or sixpence on the income tax, and you will not want any additional indirect taxation at all. I venture to say, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me, that if you were to proceed on that basis with increasing expenditure, you would absolutely ruin the finances of the country; you would permanently maintain the income tax at such a point that it would be absolutely incapable of increase in time of war. What should we, then, do in a time of emergency? Assuming that you are to have increased expenditure, you must have increased indirect taxation. What is the only alternative? An increase in the sugar duties? Will hon. Gentlemen just think for a moment what that means? My hon. friend the Member for Selkirkshire, to whose speech, though he was opposed to myself, I listened with appreciation in the earlier part of the evening, suggested that the sugar duty ought to be increased instead of a corn duty being imposed. But the sugar duty is already 20 per cent. *ad valorem* on the price of sugar. The hon. Gentleman said sugar was a comfort, not a necessity of life. That was not the argument that I heard from the Leader of the Opposition last year. I really think myself that, looking to the universal use of sugar, you can hardly call it anything else but a necessity. Double that tax—40 per cent. on the price of sugar! Is that better than a tax of 3 per cent. on

the price of corn? To my mind, one would be infinitely more severe on the poorer classes of the population than the other. That is all I have to say tonight on the relative merits of taxation of corn and sugar. The point from which I beg he Committee to consider the question is this. Our expenditure is increasing, and must increase; and it is absolutely impossible, I venture to say, for this country to meet that increased expenditure in accordance with any reasonable financial system unless you also increase indirect taxation. Choose, by all means, for your increase of indirect taxation, that which will press least heavily on the people, that which will be most diffusible and be least injurious to any body or class; but increase indirect taxation you must, and that is why I have made this proposal in the Budget of this year.

(11.43.) Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 290 Noes, 61. (Division List No. 124.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allhusen, Augustus H'nry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George

Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edwin Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Dewar, T. R. (T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fr'd Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dunn, Sir William
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart

Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)

Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Fuller, J. M. F.

Galloway, William Johnson
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Hain, Edward
Haldane, Richard Burdon

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. o (Lond'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Jno. (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)

Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire

Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.

Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowstoft)

Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin

Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesish.)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walth'mst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gr'h'm (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)

Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Parker, Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Priestley, Arthur
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert

Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Rigg, Richard
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter

Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H C (N'rth'mb. Tyneside
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier

Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Gl'morgan, Gower
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty

Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York E. R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—

Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Atherley-Jones, L.

Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John

Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randa

Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.

Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher

Gilhooly, James

Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick

Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael

Kennedy, Patrick James

Lundon, W.

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John

Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kend'l (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John

O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Power, Patrick Joseph

Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roche, John

Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal

Thompson, Dr EC (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)

White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Resolution to be reported tomorrow; Committee to sit again tomorrow.

PUBLIC OFFICES (DUBLIN) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [7th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) said he should like to call attention to the fact that the site for the Science and Art Museum in Dublin had been selected in the richest part of the city. He was quite satisfied that many more suitable sites could be found. As a citizen of Dublin he protested against the erection of a building in a part of the city at present overcrowded with buildings. He further objected to the site because a number of professional men's residences would have to be cleared away. He knew that the argument would be used that it was necessary that the Museum should be contiguous to other Museums.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 22nd April, 1902.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Manchester and Liverpool Electric Express Railway.

West Ham Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

DERBYSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL.

Reported, with an Amendment.

FINEDON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Reported, without Amendment.

RICKMANSWORTH GAS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on 17th of February and the 20th of March last discharged, and Bill committed.

NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (KINGSTON-UPON-HULL) BILL [H.L.].

Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Friday, the 9th of May next.

CITY OF LONDON (SPITALFIELDS MARKET) BILL,

COMMERCIAL GAS BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

FURNESS RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL,

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY (CRUMLIN VIADUCT) BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL,

HIGHAM FERRERS AND RUSHDEN WATER BOARD BILL,

MANCHESTER CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL,

Read 2ª, and committed.

WADHURST GAS BILL,

Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY (LUNATIC ASYLUMS) BILL [H.L.],

Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on 24th of February and 20th of March last discharged; and Bill committed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL [H.L.],

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Ardsley East and West, Barton Regis, Blaydon, Chester-le-Street, Church Stretton, Tees, Lower Bebington, Newburn, Seghill, Earsdon, and Tynemouth (Rural), and Stanley (Yorkshire).

Presented by the Earl of Dudley; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL [H.L.] (No. 46).

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882

and 1888, and the Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, relating to Carnoustie, Dumbarton, Glasgow (Kinning Park), Govan (Extension), Nairn, and St. Andrew's.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2768. France (Calais, etc.).
No. 2769. Germany (Chemnitz).

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890 (THE LONDON (CLERKENWELL AND HOLBORN) IMPROVEMENT SCHEME, 1900).

Statements of modifications permitted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to be made in the details of the London (Clerkenwell and Holborn) Improvement Scheme, 1900, so far as relate to (1) the Union Buildings area; (2) the Aylesbury Place area. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Message from the Commons, That they have ordered that the Committee appointed by them to join with the Committee of this House to consider the subject of the housing of the working classes, do meet the Lords Committee in Committee Room B on Friday, the 2nd of May next, at three o'clock, as proposed by their Lordships.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next, and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 48.)

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Acts, in regard to the preparation of a Supplementary Valuation Roll, was presented by the Lord Balfour: read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Friday, the 2nd of May next. (No. 49.)

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 22nd April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

CROYDON AND DISTRICT ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(3.10.) MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I desire to say a few words, not upon the merits of the Bill, but upon another point. I hold in my hands a copy of a Whip sent out as follows—

"Croydon District Electric Tramways Bill—As the Government will not allow any discussion on private business to-morrow (Tuesday) the Second Reading of this Bill will be postponed till Monday next." Signed, W. Hart Dyke, H. W. Forster, Vicary Gibbs, Kenneth Balfour, J. Penn, J. E. Ellis, J. T. Woodhouse."

I wish to explain that I was not asked to sign my name, and that its appearance is entirely unauthorised. I have no opinion in respect of the Bill. I have received from Messrs. Sherwood & Co. the following letter—

"We are sorry that your name has appeared on the notice which has been sent round on behalf of Members interested in the rejection of

this Bill stating that the Second Reading would be postponed till Monday. Our instructions were clear that no use was to be made of your name without your express permission, and we can only regret the mistake which the Whip's messenger has made." — Yours faithfully, Sherwood & Co.

It is not a slight matter thus to put down the names of Members of Parliament with respect to a Bill. The use of my name was entirely unauthorised, and I must say I do not think this is a satisfactory explanation of the action of a Parliamentary agent in dealing with the names of hon. Members, and then attributing the mistake to a Whip's Messenger. I think the heads of this firm, whom I have known for many years, should have taken care that the Whip was issued in a proper way.

* MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks): As I have been identified with the opposition to this Bill I feel it only right to say a word in explanation of the way in which, as I understand it, the name of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Divlsion was put upon this Whip. I found that a considerable amount of feeling was developed on the part of Members of this House in opposition to this Bill, and as part of my constituency is affected by the Bill, and as representatives of the Beckenham Urban District Council came to consult me as to what steps they should take in order to secure its rejection, I had an interview with the representative of Messrs. Sherwood and Company in the lobby, and gave him the names of the hon. Members which appear on the Whip, except those of the hon. Member who has just spoken, and of the hon. Member for Huddersfield. I suggested to the Parliamentary agent that it would be a desirable thing, if we could, to secure the support of the two hon. Members who sit on that side of the House. Now I come to the way in which the mistake occurred. The Parliamentary agent wrote down on a piece of paper the names of the hon. Gentlemen who had already promised to support me in this matter, and he wrote on the back of the same piece of paper the names of the two hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite, merely as a memorandum. When he handed the paper to the person who had to send out the Whip he omitted to erase from the back of the paper the names which had been placed thereupon, and the clerk who copied it having copied the page intended to be copied, then saw the two names on the back and put them down. I do not pretend that that mitigates what I fully admit to be a very just cause of offence to the hon. Gentlemen, and I can assure him that no one regrets it more than I do.

* MR. SPEAKER: The Question is, "That this Bill be now read a Second Time."

* MR. FORSTER: I thought my hon. friend the Deputy Chairman had something to say. Before I deal with the Bill itself I should like to say one or two more words upon the reason why I object to the Second Reading of this Bill. I object not on the merits at all. I have nothing whatever to do with the merits of the Bill. I do not even know whether it is a good Bill or a bad one. I object to it because it seems to me that there has been a misinterpretation of the spirit of one of the Standing Orders of the House. The Bill proposes to authorise the construction of several lines of tramway, which may be roughly described as three continuous lines of tramway. These lines originate in Croydon, and pass through or into the administrative areas under the jurisdiction of neighbouring local authorities. Standing Order No. 22 provides that where it is proposed to construct a continuous line of tramways which pssses through more than one administrative area, it shall be necessary to obtain the consent of the local authorities having jurisdiction over at least two-thirds of the route proposed. One of these three lines proposed in this Bill starts in Croydon, passes through the district of Penge, and terminates in the district of Beckenham. It lies within the boundaries of the Corporation of Croydon for something like—roughly speaking—3¼ miles, in Penge 1¾ miles, and in Beckenham from 1¼ to 1½ miles. It will, therefore, be apparent to the House that to comply with the provisions of Standing Order No. 22, it was essential for the promoters to bring up the consent of Croydon and one other local authority. When the Bill was before the Examiners it was found that Beckenham objected to the Bill, and Penge consented. Croydon also consented, but in their letter of consent made reference to an

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Birmingham Assay Office Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

KENT WATER BILL,

SOUTHPORT AND LYTHAM TRAMROAD BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION WATER BILL [LORDS].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

DUBLIN PORT AND DOCKS BOARD BILL,

HALIFAX CORPORATION BILL,

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

CATERHAM AND DISTRICT GAS BILL [LORDS],

DARLEY DALE WATER BILL [LORDS].

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LIVERPOOL GRAIN STORAGE AND TRANSIT COMPANY BILL [LORDS].

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

BOURNEMOUTH GAS AND WATER BILL,

SOUTH WALES ELECTRICAL POWER DISTRIBUTION BILL,

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL,

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from tomorrow till Wednesday, 7th May.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Rhondda Urban District Council, in the County of Glamorgan, to construct and work tramways; to make a new road, street widenings, and improvements; to make additional waterworks; to confer upon the Council further powers with respect to their water and gas undertakings; to borrow additional moneys; and for other purposes." [Rhondda Urban District Council Tramways Bill (Lords).]

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the revision of the register of freehold tenants of the manor of Rusthall; and for better defining and regulating their rights; and for amending the Rusthall Manor Acts, 1739 and 1863; and for other purposes." [Rusthall Manor Bill (Lords).]

RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL [LORDS].

RUSTHALL MANOR BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON AND INDIA DOCKS (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Wandsworth; Croydon; and Nottingham; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bedwellty; Chatham; and Sale; to lie upon the Table.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

Petition from Islington, against; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Todmorden, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bonhill and Comrie; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petitions for legislation: From Cardiff and Newark; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Mere, against; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL DECLARATION.

Petition from Seaforth, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Hornsea; Whithaven; Great Ayton; Handsworth; and Manchester; and Salford; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS BILL.

Petition from Fulham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return [presented 21st April] to be printed. [No. 151.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Statement of modifications permitted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to be made in the details of The London (Clerkenwell and Holborn) Improvement Scheme, 1900, so far as relates to the Aylesbury Place Area [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Statement of modifications permitted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to be made in the details of The London (Clerkenwell and Holborn) Improvement Scheme, 1900, so far as relates to the Union Buildings Area [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the Amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 152.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS.)

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 17th April; *Mr. Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.]

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Birmingham Assay Office Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

KENT WATER BILL,

SOUTHPORT AND LYTHAM TRAMROAD BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION WATER BILL [LORDS].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

DUBLIN PORT AND DOCKS BOARD BILL,

HALIFAX CORPORATION BILL,

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time tomorrow.

CATERHAM AND DISTRICT GAS BILL [LORDS],

DARLEY DALE WATER BILL [LORDS].

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LIVERPOOL GRAIN STORAGE AND TRANSIT COMPANY BILL [LORDS].

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

BOURNEMOUTH GAS AND WATER BILL,

SOUTH WALES ELECTRICAL POWER DISTRIBUTION BILL,

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL,

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from tomorrow till Wednesday, 7th May.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Rhondda Urban District Council, in the County of Glamorgan, to construct and work tramways; to make a new road, street widenings, and improvements; to make additional waterworks; to confer upon the Council further powers with respect to their water and gas undertakings; to borrow additional moneys; and for other purposes." [Rhondda Urban District Council Tramways Bill (Lords).]

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the revision of the register of freehold tenants of the manor of Rusthall; and for better defining and regulating their rights; and for amending the Rusthall Manor Acts, 1739 and 1863; and for other purposes." [Rusthall Manor Bill (Lords).]

RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL [LORDS].

RUSTHALL MANOR BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON AND INDIA DOCKS (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Wandsworth; Croydon; and Nottingham; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bedwellty; Chatham; and Sale; to lie upon the Table.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

Petition from Islington, against; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Todmorden, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bonhill and Comrie; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF LAND VALUES.

Petitions for legislation: From Cardiff and Newark; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Mere, against; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL DECLARATION.

Petition from Seaforth, against alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Hornsea; Whithaven; Great Ayton; Handsworth; and Manchester; and Salford; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS BILL.

Petition from Fulham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return [presented 21st April] to be printed. [No. 151.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Statement of modifications permitted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to be made in the details of The London (Clerkenwell and Holborn) Improvement Scheme, 1900, so far as relates to the Aylesbury Place Area [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Statement of modifications permitted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to be made in the details of The London (Clerkenwell and Holborn) Improvement Scheme, 1900, so far as relates to the Union Buildings Area [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the Gross Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1902, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the Amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 152.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS.)

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 17th April; *Mr. Price*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 153.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 10, 1902).

Copy presented, of Agreement, between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial Relations between France and Zanzibar. Signed at London, 27th June, 1901. Ratifications exchanged at London, 22nd February, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2768 and 2769 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES.)

Copy presented, of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LAND REGISTRY.

Return ordered, "of the work done in the Land Registry under the Land Transfer Acts, 1875 and 1897, The Land Registry Act, 1862, the Mortgage Debenture Acts, 1865 and 1870, The Improvement of Land Act, 1864, The Land Charges Registration and Searches Act, 1888, The Land Charges Act, 1900, The Middlesex Registry Act, 1708, and The Land Registry (Middlesex Deeds) Act, 1891; and showing the amount of Fees received, and the amount of Salaries and Expenses, in the Land Registry from the 1st day of April, 1901, to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 315, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. H. D. Greene.*)

SEA FISHERIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Copy ordered, "of Statistical Tables and Memorandum relating to the Sea Fisheries of the United Kingdom in the year 1901; including also a Return showing the quantity of fish carried by railway from each of the principal ports of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland in each year from 1896 to 1901, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 32, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

TEACHERS' PENSION FUND (IRELAND).

Return ordered, relative thereto, showing—

	Total income.				Total outlay.					
	Interest on stock, 1,800,000.	Teachers' contributions.	Amounts voted in aid.	Interest on invested balances.	Total amount of pensions.	Total amount of gratuities.	Total amount of premiums refunded.	Balances in favour.	How balances invested.	Gains or losses in purchase or sale of stock.
1880..										
1881..										
1882..										
1883..										
1884..										
1885..										
1886..										
1887..										
1888..										
1889..										
1890..										
1891..										
1892..										
1893..										
1894..										
1895..										
1896..										
1897..										
1898..										
1899..										
1900..										
1901..										

—(*Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.*)

EAST INDIA (ASSAM LABOUR AND EMIGRATION).

Address for "Return of Reports and Correspondence relating to Act No. 6 of 1901, to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Emigration to the Labour Districts of Assam."—(*Mr. Schwann.*)

(3.45.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Peace Negotiations.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): On behalf of the hon. Member for Caithness, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state whether there was any Law of the late Transvaal Republic by which Transvaal delegates to any peace conference were required to refer any proposed terms of peace to the commandoes in the field for their approval.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I am not aware of any legislation which deals with this particular point.

Spion Kop Despatches.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government will either publish the documents relating to Spion Kop whose immediate publication Sir Charles Warren solicits, or permit Sir Charles Warren to publish the copies thereof in his possession.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale): I also beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, seeing that the despatches reflecting on the military capacity of Sir Charles Warren have been written by an officer whom the Government have judged unfit to command an Army Corps at home, whether they will publish, or allow Sir Charles Warren to publish, his report, although it does not form part of the original despatches, refuting the charges brought against him.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I distinctly told both hon. Members yesterday that neither would the documents referred to be published by the Government, nor would permission be given to Sir Charles Warren to publish them.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: For what reasons?

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if, on the termination of hostilities, any opportunity will be afforded to Sir Charles Warren of vindicating his character?

MR. BRODRICK: I cannot say what will be done when, on the conclusion of peace, there is an inquiry into the war. But, so far as any newspaper controversy, such as seems to be contemplated by the Question, is concerned, the decision of the Government is absolute.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER: I beg to give notice that I will raise the question at the first possible opportunity.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what explanation, if any, can be given for the fact that on his return from South Africa General Buller was praised in an Army Order, notwithstanding the knowledge of the Government of Lord Roberts's opinion on the Spion Kop operations; and can he explain why General Buller was given the command of the First Army Corps, having regard to the promise of the Secretary of State for War that the commanders should be ready and able to take the field.

MR. BRODRICK: I must decline to discuss either of these statements within the limits of a reply to a Question across the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: When will the right hon. Gentleman state his reasons?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman says he declines to answer the Question, and he is within his right in doing so.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With great respect, Sir, may I not ask the right hon. Gentleman, when he says he cannot give me the information by way of an answer across the floor of the House, when he will give this explanation?

MR. BRODRICK: When my action, or the action of the Government, is challenged, I shall be ready to explain at any time.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what was the conclusion at which Lord Roberts arrived with respect to the adoption of the suggestion made to him of the propriety of the official publication of the full text of General Buller's heliographic message to Sir George White at Ladysmith—a suggestion which Lord Roberts stated, in an official letter dated 8th November, was receiving very careful consideration.

MR. BRODRICK: I have already indicated the opinion of the Government in this matter, and Lord Roberts is entirely in accord with it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: On what grounds?

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, are we ever going to know the text of the Ladysmith heliogram?

MR. BRODRICK: It is not the intention of the Government to publish isolated telegrams in any case, and, in the opinion of the Government, no case has yet been made out to make it necessary to publish the whole of the correspondence relating to the conduct of operations in Natal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was not General Buller dismissed for publishing an isolated telegram?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Omissions from Official Despatches.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the practice at the Foreign Office is to signify by asterisks or *lacunæ*, or by the heading "Extract," that documents published by that Office are not published in their entirety; will he explain why a different practice prevails at the War Office; and, with the view of preventing the publication of documents from which passages have been suppressed, without any notification of the suppression, from conveying the impression that these documents are published in their entirety and misleading the public, whether he will alter the practice by which documents from which material passages have been suppressed are published by the War Office as complete accounts of the transactions to which they relate.

MR. BRODRICK: It never has been the practice to publish despatches with asterisks or *lacunæ* indicating omitted portions, and I have no intention of altering this practice.

In reply to a further Question as to the practice at the Foreign Office,

MR. BRODRICK said he had no desire to alter the practice, which was, he believed, to put something in the heading.

Boer Burghers' Permits.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state by whose authority the military authorities in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies charge 6d. each time they issue a permit to members of burghers' families, either to leave their farms or to bring food from the towns; and can he state how the proceeds of the sums derived from these fees for permits are employed.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (LORD STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have no information on the subject of the Question.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Have any inquiries been made? This custom is productive of considerable embarrassment to the people. It ought to be stopped if it is not legal.

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the vacant steps in the Royal Army Medical Corps, under Article 362 of the Royal Warrant, have been filled up; and whether it is intended that the officers concerned will have their promotion ante-dated, in view of their having been kept out of pay and allowances for over six months: and whether retired and seconded officers are shown under that grade and their places left vacant contrary to the rule and practice in other corps.

LORD STANLEY: The promotions consequent on the vacancies in the ranks of Surgeon-General and Colonel, Royal Army Medical Corps, have been gazetted. The selection of officers for increased pay under Article 362 of the Pay Warrant has been made. These promotions will be ante-dated. Seconded and retired officers employed are not included in the authorised number of the ranks referred to, though shown therein.

Bands for Royal Garrison Regiments.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can see his way to sanction bands for the Royal Garrison Regiments; and whether he is aware that many of the men are ex-bandsmen and at present are debarred from keeping up their musical training.

LORD STANLEY: Bands have already been sanctioned for these regiments.

Guard Room Beds.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of abolishing the guard bed, which is a structure of sloping planks with a wooden head-rest in lieu of a pillow, and which is at present in use in guardrooms in the United Kingdom, and substituting barrack cots with coir mattresses and pillows; and whether he is aware that this change has already been carried out in India and China.

LORD STANLEY: The matter shall be considered.

H.M.S. "Medusa."

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the boiler space in H.M.S. "Medusa" was too small for the Dürr water-tube boilers at present being fitted into her at Jarrow, and that the tubes had to be bent to get them into the space; and will he state who is responsible for the error.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The arrangement of boilers in the "Medusa" was designed by Messrs. Dürr, the patentees and makers of the boiler, under the instructions of the Boiler Committee. The boilers are not too large for the space available, but in order to avoid the necessity of altering projecting coal bunker bulkheads, and to avoid having to remove feed pumps when drawing tubes, a few of the tubes in the outermost rows of each boiler have been slightly bent. This was done by agreement with Messrs. Dürr, and under the direction of their representative. It is not anticipated that the boilers will be less effective on account of the alteration. It was necessary because the "Medusa" was not originally designed for this particular type of boiler.

H.M.S. "Spartiate."

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state how many tubes were in the condensers of H.M.S. "Spartiate," how many were faulty, what was the nature of the fault, and what time, in days, has been spent in re-tubing the condenser.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There are 10,104 tubes in the main and 2,474 tubes in the auxiliary condensers of the "Spartiate." Whilst steaming, three of the tubes in the main condenser broke, and one tube split; in consequence 100 tubes were drawn for examination and test. The results were not satisfactory, and it was decided entirely to retube the condenser. The time taken in withdrawing the old tubes was ten days, and in inserting the new tubes fifty-three days. The "Spartiate" will recommence her trials today or tomorrow.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: What has kept the vessel idle two years?

Portsmouth Dockyard.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there is a prospect of reduction of work and consequent dismissal of employees from Portsmouth Dockyard.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There will be no diminution in the amount of work at Portsmouth Dockyard, and no reduction in the number of men employed is in contemplation.

Assistant Paymasters in the Navy.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will explain why assistant paymasters in His Majesty's Navy are promoted to paymasters at thirty-one years of age, while engineers are not promoted to chiefs until thirty-eight years of age; and if he can state why the engineering branch of the Navy is thus treated in the matter of promotion.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Promotions are made in each branch of the service according to the circumstances and necessities of that branch. The average age at which assistant paymasters are promoted to be paymasters at the present time is thirty-one years and four months. The average age at which engineers are promoted to chief engineers is thirty-six years and three months at the present time. It is necessary to observe that a chief engineer ranks with a staff paymaster, and that the average age at which the rank of staff paymaster is reached is thirty-seven years and three months, or one year later than the average

age at which, under present circumstances, chief engineers receive their appointment.

Government Employees and the Coronation Holidays.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the dockyard and other employees in his Department are to be allowed to choose whether or not they will observe the coronation holidays, or whether, if these holidays are to be made compulsory, the employees are to be paid their full wages.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Royal Dockyards will be closed on the 26th and 27th June, which days are to be observed as public holidays. The holidays will be compulsory, but full wages will be paid in respect of them.

Horse Breeding in India.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can say when he will be able to present the Report of the Commission sent to inquire into the causes of the failure of horse-breeding in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Member refers, I presume, to the "Report of the Horse and Mule Breeding Commission assembled under the orders of the Government of India, 1900-01." The Report has been printed, and copies are obtainable from the India Office, on payment. I do not propose to present it to Parliament, but I shall be glad to place copies in the library of the House for the convenience of hon. Members.

Indian Barracks Accommodation.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that the dimensions of the rooms and quarters provided for native commissioned officers, and the rank and file of the native Indian troops in the cantonments at Ahmedabad, Baroda, Cawnpore, and Lucknow do not come up to the standard authorised, will he state whether arrangements are in progress in each of these cantonments to provide new buildings containing the authorised accommodation; and, if so, can he say by what date each cantonment indicated is expected to be provided with the improved accommodation.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I cannot say whether new buildings are under construction at the stations mentioned by the hon. Member: but I know that the Government of India are fully alive to the importance of improving native barracks wherever they are defective up to the authorised standard, according as opportunity offers.

MR. WEIR: Does that apply to Cawnpore and Lucknow?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes.

MR. WEIR: Nothing has been done there?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no details.

MR. WEIR: I will furnish them.

India and the West Indian Sugar Industry.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the announcement that a grant in aid will be given from the Imperial funds to the West Indian Sugar Colonies, it is intended to assist Indian native and Mauritius sugar growers by the imposition of import duties against the Austrian and German cartels until the bounties are abolished in accordance with the terms of the Brussels Sugar Convention.

LORD G. HAMILTON: There are countervailing duties on sugar in operation in India against the bounty or cartel system of foreign countries, and if these duties are proved to be insufficient it is in the power of the Government of India to raise them.

India and the Army Scheme.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government have expressed any opinion on the charge of £786,000 a year proposed by the Army scheme of this year

to be added to the financial responsibilities of India; if so, will he state its purport.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have heard from the Government of India, and am in communication with the War Office on the subject to which the hon. Member's Question refers. The Government of India urged certain objections against the financial effect of the War Office proposals.

MR. LAMBERT: When will the noble Lord be able to inform the House of the nature of these objections?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I am still in correspondence with the Secretary of State for War on the matter, and am unable to make a statement until that correspondence is completed.

West Africa—Rainsford v. Browne.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, in the case of Rainsford, lately District Commissioner of West Africa, against Major Browne, of the West Africa (Ashanti) Force for libel, arrest, and false imprisonment, tried in the Dublin Courts before the Lord Chief Baron and a special jury last February, in which judgment was given for the plaintiff with £500 damages, the amount of the damages has since been paid, and the defendant has abandoned his intention of moving for a new trial; whether the Government have paid the damages or required Major Browne to pay them from his private resources; and whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table the charge of the Lord Chief Baron to the jury in that case, which dealt with propositions of constitutional law and the jurisdiction of the civil courts where the country is in a state of rebellion.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am aware of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. The Gold Coast Government has paid to Major Browne the amount of the damages in the action. The latter part of the hon. Member's Question should be addressed to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Budget Proposals—Corn and Flour Duties.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will lay upon the Table a statement giving the name of all articles on which the customs import duties of 3d. and 5d. respectively will be charged, with the quantities of each imported during the financial year ending 31st March, 1902, and the respective amounts which each article would have contributed had the proposed duty been then in operation.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): If the hon. Member will place on the Paper a Motion for such a Return as he desires, I will see what can be given.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Will the right hon. Gentleman also give in the Return fuller details of the articles subject to the flour and meal duty? When the tariff was abolished, all such articles were enumerated. I think we are entitled to have them in detail now.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Will not a list of articles be supplied to all the Custom Houses in the Kingdom, and cannot the House have a copy of that?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Of course any such list will be at the disposal of the House.

Malting Barley Contracts.

MR. ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, in view of Section 10 of the Finance Act, 1901, not covering the existing contracts between maltsters and brewers in the United Kingdom, he would exempt such contracts for barley imported for malting purposes from the operation of the proposed duty on corn.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I cannot say whether the section covers or does not cover the particular class of contracts referred to. But in any case I could not propose to Parliament the exemption of such contracts from the corn duty.

Death Duties.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer can he state whether the capital value of free personalty whereon death duties were paid, which in 1899-1900 was £198,971,000 and in 1900–1901 was £181,823,000, had increased or decreased in 1901–1902, and also what the amount actually was for the latter year; and can he state whether the number of estates exceeding £1,000,000, which in 1900-1901 were nine in all, had increased or decreased in 1901–1902, and also what was the number thereof in the latter year.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The final figures for 1901 1902 are not yet available, but it is expected that the capital value of free personalty whereon death duties were paid will prove to be slighly more than in 1900–1901. The number of millionaire estates in respect of which original affidavits were filed in 1901–1902 was eight.

New Loan.

MR. M'LAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether applicants for the Consol Loan under £10,000 only received 5 per cent. of the amount applied for; will he state on what principle the allotments have been made; and what proportion of the loan was reserved for the United States before being offered publicly for subscription in London; and why ordinary British investors applying for moderate amounts have been to such an extent deprived of the opportunity of contributing to the financial needs of their own country.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The allotment was *pro rata* throughout, except that nobody got less than £100. The amount taken firm by American houses was £5,000,000. The arrangements made were the same as last year. I feel sure that the knowledge that a large portion of the loan had been taken by the leading financial houses and banks here and elsewhere had no little effect in inducing the great number of applications.

Population and Financial Statistics.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will lay upon the Table a Memorandum of a similar nature to the one he caused to be issued in 1896 (Parliamentary Paper No. 163), relating to the progress of population, revenue, and expenditure, bringing the figures up to the end of the financial year 1901-2.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think a satisfactory Return of this kind could be prepared at the present moment: the matter is complicated by the war expenditure of the past three years.

Harbour Construction in the Crofting Counties.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether the Committee appointed in 1899 to inquire into applications from local authorities for Government assistance in constructing harbours have yet made their Report; has a grant been made to any authority in either of the crofting counties; if so, will he state the name of the authority, the amount of the grant, and the name of the harbour in respect of which it has been made; and, in view of the fact that the Treasury have ruled that applications for assistance cannot be referred to the Committee unless the local authority undertakes the permanent maintenance of the harbour, and provides from local or outside sources two-thirds of the whole cost, will he consider the expediency of having these rules relaxed in their application to the Highland crofting counties, having regard to the burden imposed on local authorities in those counties by the conditions at present imposed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Committee to which the hon. Member refers was not appointed to make any general inquiry and report, but to consider specific applications for monetary grants in aid to harbours, having regard to certain conditions and limitations. No grant has been made to an authority in any of the crofting counties. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, I have been in communication with the Treasury, and understand they are not prepared to relax the rules in the manner suggested by the hon. Member.

Copenhagen International Fisheries Council.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a date has

yet been fixed for the meeting of the International Council at Copenhagen; will he state by whom the Board of Trade and Scottish Office will be represented, and whether any efforts will be made to induce the representatives of the various Powers to agree to waters, such as the Moray Firth, being closed against all trawlers, foreign as well as British.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No date has yet been fixed. Either his Majesty's Minister at Copenhagen or Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff, together with Professor D'Arcy Thompson and Mr. Walter Garstang, will represent Great Britain. The subject referred to in the last paragraph of the Question will no doubt be raised at the Conference.

Continental Studs.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will send to inspect and report on the great studs of France, Germany, Hungary, Russia, and other countries, with a view to giving all helpful information to the farmers and horse breeders of this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Question of the hon. Member is somewhat wanting in clearness. I see no advantage to the British farmer, if he desires to furnish a supply of horses to the Army, in advertising the sources of foreign supply. If by "great studs" he means the studs under the control of the War Offices of the countries named, then the Question is one for the War Office to answer. In any case, it is not clear that the farmer who, as a rule, would only have a few horses to sell has any interest in the hon. Member's suggestion of large studs, whether in national or private hands.

Milk-Blended Butter.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can state whether milk-blended butter comes within the terms of the Margarine Act.

MR. HANBURY: The question whether the sale of the article called milk-blended butter is not contrary to the provisions of the Margarine Act is now before the Law Courts on Appeal, and I cannot anticipate that decision. In any case, the practice of adding water to butter appears to me to be at least as objectionable as that of adding animal fat; and should the existing law be insufficient to deal with the practice, I shall, no doubt, have to consider whether fresh legislation is not necessary.

Postal Arrangements for Central Africa.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that Mr. Commissioner Sharpe, in his last Report on the British Central Africa Protectorate, points out on page 31 that in consequence of letters intended for the district around the Victoria Nyanza being addressed Central Africa, or British Central Africa, instead of Uganda, they are considerably delayed through being forwarded to the Protectorate; and will he consider the expediency of acquainting the public, through the medium of the Post Office Circular, with the correct mode of address for correspondence such as that indicated.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The Postmaster General has seen the statement in the Report, but no cases of delay from the cause referred to appear to have been brought under his notice. Special attention has, however, been drawn to the manner in which correspondence for the Victoria Nyanza district should be dealt with at the General Post Office, London, through which it all passes. A notice on the subject in the Post Office Circular would not have the desired effect, as provincial postmasters, among whom that publication is circulated, do not have to do more than send the correspondence up to London.

Coronation Flags—Imports from Germany.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that thousands of orders for Coronation flags have been placed in Germany; and whether he is prepared to put a heavy registration duty on these.

The hon. Member complained that certain words which he had put in the Question in order to make his meaning

perfectly clear had been struck out at the Table. Might he ask if, in the judgment of Mr. Speaker, they should have been struck out? They were——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member, if he objected to the alteration, should have told me. He cannot use the words now.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I will put the Question as it stands.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The answer is "No."

Crown Leases in Regent's Park.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any of the leases of private owners in Regent's Park have been extended or renewed during the last ten years; and whether it is the intention of the Commissioners to give the first offer of obtaining the leases when they fall in to the public authorities in the neighbourhood.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No lease to a private person has been extended or renewed during the last ten years. The only lease which has been renewed during that period is the lease of the Royal Botanic Society, which stands on a different footing from those to which I understand my hon. and gallant friend's Question to refer. I have had no indication that any of the public authorities wish to acquire any of the other leaseholds. If I receive any such information, I will take care that their proposals are carefully considered before any fresh leases are granted.

Ex-Sergeant Sheridan, R.I.C.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mrs. Quinlan, of Lough Hospital, County Limerick, whose hay was burnt by Sergeant Sheridan and his accomplice, Constable Keegan, was compensated by application to the presentment sessions, and, if so, what was the amount of the compensation and over what townlands was the compensation exacted; and, seeing that the mother of Con Bray, who was wrongfully imprisoned for the crime committed by Sergeant Sheridan, was afterwards compensated for the loss of her son, and that Constable Keegan, on his retirement, obtained a gratuity, will he take measures to refund to the taxpayers the respective moneys which were levied on them for a crime committed by police.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The levy of compensation amounted to £50. I cannot undertake to discover the ratepayers who paid this levy nearly four years ago. We know that Bray did not burn the hay, and his mother has been compensated. We know that Sheridan falsely accused Bray of this crime, but we have seen no evidence to prove that Sheridan committed it.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would state what money consideration Sergeant Sheridan received to leave the country, and out of what fund it was paid.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the compensation which has been paid be refunded to the County Council for public purposes?

MR. WYNDHAM: I think that ought to be done, if it can be proved that Sheridan committed that particular offence.

MR. DELANY again asked for an answer to his Question.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Considering that Sergeant Sheridan swore falsely——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. DELANY again asked for an answer.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid) asked if inquiry would be made as to whether Sheridan did burn the property in question.

*MR. SPEAKER said that all this was outside the scope of the Question on the Paper. Hon. Members could not now carry on a discussion.

Kilmallock Sub-Land Commission.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant

of Ireland, is he aware that the Sub-Land Commissioners held a sitting in Kilmallock for the fixing of fair rents on the 4th February last; will he say what progress they have since made in coming to their decisions and communicating them to the parties interested and to the public; on what data or on what statistics do the Land Commissioners base their decisions; is he aware that they send persons to fairs to ascertain the current prices of cattle; and will he say how those persons are paid, and what are their qualifications for obtaining such information.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Assistant Commissioners expect to announce their decisions at the end of the present month. Fair rents are fixed by the Land Commission after hearing the parties, and having regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant, respectively, and considering all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district. Reports on the prices of live stock are made by persons employed, not by the Commissioners, but by the Department of Agriculture. The payments to them amount to about £200 per annum. Full information as to the method of collection of these prices will be found in a Paper recently presented to Parliament. (Command Paper, No. 558 of the present session.)

MR. LUNDON: Who pays the persons who report on the prices of stock?

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture.

Breaches of the Irish Fishery Laws.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the grounds on which the fines imposed for breaches of the fishery laws were reduced by the Irish Executive in the cases of William Leckey, of Cullybackey, whose fine of £4, imposed at Ballymena Petty Sessions on 6th December, 1901, for killing a spawning salmon, was subsequently reduced to £2; Thomas Judge, whose fine of £2, imposed at Maghera Petty Sessions on 28th December, 1901, for illegally killing a salmon, was subsequently reduced to £1; and William Lyan, whose fine of £4, recently imposed at Newport, County Tipperary Petty Sessions, for spearing salmon, was subsequently reduced by the Lord Lieutenant to £1, with proportionate reduction of imprisonment; and whether he is aware that William Leckey and Thomas Judge were able to pay the full fine.

MR. WYNDHAM: The fines were reduced, as stated, by the Lord Lieutenant and the Lords Justices in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy.

MR. SETON-KARR asked if the remission of fines in such cases did not make it difficult for Boards of Conservators to institute prosecutions for breaches of the law.

MR. WYNDHAM said his hon. friend must allow him to adhere to the rule he had hitherto followed, not to express any opinion on the exercise of the prerogative of mercy.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked if the Chief Secretary, as the representative of the Executive Government, was not responsible for the exercise of the prerogative.

Altmore Tenancy Dispute.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that about fifteen tenants residing in the townland of Altmore, Pomeroy, County Tyrone, who held under a lease of thirty-one years, dated 20th March, 1856, are debarred from having a judicial rent fixed because the lessor, unknown to the said tenants, devised their holdings by a reversionary lease, dated 1st August, 1856, to a relative of his, who soon after the transaction went to New Zealand and died there intestate; whether he will cause a full inquiry to be made into all the circumstances in connection with the case of these tenants and their treatment by their landlords, with the view to afford them the benefits of the Land Acts.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information on the matters alleged in this Question, nor have I any power to make inquiry as suggested.

MR. FLYNN asked, as several cases of the kind had occurred in Ireland, would the Government consider the desirability of drafting a new Bill to deal with the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM said that was a suggestion which might be entertained if it appeared that the evil were widespread.

MR. DOOGAN was proceeding to ask a further Question when Mr. SPEAKER intervened.

MR. DOOGAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state on what grounds the application of Hugh Donaghey, Altmore, County Tyrone (Record Number 13085A), to have a judicial rent fixed was dismissed.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reasons for the dismissal of this application were stated in the Order of the sub-Commissioners, made more than two years ago. The Order was not appealed against.

Haulbowline Dockyard—Fair Wages Resolution.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: (Cork Co., E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in the case of works carried out by contract at the Haulbowline Dockyard, it is made a condition in the terms of tender that the standard rate of Government wages shall be paid by contractors to the workmen employed by them; whether any representations have been made to the Admiralty on this subject; and will the Government stipulate, when letting work out to contract, that the Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons must be observed, and the same rate of wages paid by contractors as is at present allowed to workmen employed under Departmental control.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): Every contractor invited to tender for works at Haulbowline has received a letter calling his attention to the Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons, and has given an assurance that he will conform to its conditions. I am not aware that any representations have been made to the Admiralty on this subject.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What steps are taken by the Admiralty to ensure that these conditions are adhered to.

*MR. PRETYMAN: In the case of every contractor who is allowed to be placed on the Admiralty speech a letter is written to him calling attention to the Fair Wages Resolution, and he is required to give an assurance that he will comply with the conditions. The hon. Member has not quite accurately stated them in his Question. He speaks of the standard rate of Government wages, the Resolution speaks of "the current rate of wages in the district."

H.M.S. "Mars" Inquest.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings at the inquest held in Queenstown in connection with the disaster on board H.M.S. "Mars"; whether he is aware that the Coroner protested against the conduct of District Inspector Wade during the course of the inquiry; and whether District Inspector Wade will be called upon for an explanation of his conduct.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Coroner appears to have assumed that the District Inspector was placing obstacles in the way of the inquiry. It was also alleged that the District Inspector laughed during this serious investigation into a grave calamity. The District Inspector reports that he used every exertion to facilitate the inquiry, and he denies that he laughed.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a member of the jury also protested against the conduct of the Inspector?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have read a verbatim report of the inquiry, and I have come to the conclusion that the Coroner and some of the jurymen thought, and honestly so, that offence was intended. I accept the word of the Inspector that he did not intend offence, and there the matter rests.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. M'GOVERN (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the Irish Land Commission has had to reduce the amount of the purchase money agreed to be paid by tenants to their landlords in a number of cases during the past ten years, on the report of their inspectors who visited the holdings, on the grounds that the farms would not be security for the advances asked for owing to the insolvency of the tenants, and the amount of the price agreed upon; is he aware that the landlords in the majority of such cases have afterwards accepted the reduced prices recommended by the inspectors; and that the Irish Land Commission issued a new rule during the past year dispensing with the inspection of holdings by their inspector when the landlords' tenants agree as to price; will he state what precautions, if any, are now taken by the Irish Land Commission to prevent insolvent tenants, in order to prevent themselves being evicted, agreeing to give too large a price for their holdings; and will the failure of the tenants to pay the annuities payable to the Irish Land Commission fall on the local ratepayers or be borne by the Treasury.

MR. WYNDHAM: Applications for advances have been refused on the grounds of insufficient security, and other reasons, such as defective title. The Commissioners do not reduce the amount of the purchase money arrived at by agreement between the parties. In some instances where advances were refused on the grounds stated, applications were subsequently received and passed for reduced advances. The subject of the new rule was discussed in this House on Friday last. Section 2 of the Act of 1885 requires that the Commission must be satisfied as to the sufficiency of the security on the advance applied for, and the rule in question is but an echo of that section.

Technical Instruction in Ireland.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland issued in June, 1900, suggestions for the guidance of local authorities in the preparation of schemes, and in December, 1900, a memorandum as to the powers and procedure of local authorities under the Technical Instruction Acts of 1889 and 1891, and the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899; and that in these documents the Department state that rates struck for technical instruction under the Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891, would carry in addition to the grants under the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, a grant equivalent to the amount of the rate under the Acts of 1889 and 1891; and, seeing that the Galway County Council, who struck rates which produced £773, have been informed that only £407 will be payable, and that the continuance of even this grant is not guaranteed for more than three years, and having regard to the assurances given and to the documents referred to, the Government will arrange that the full amount of the equivalent grant under the Acts of 1889 and 1891 will be made available for technical instruction in the county of Galway, so long as the County Council contributes a like amount.

MR. WYNDHAM: The facts are generally as stated in the first paragraph. There is some doubt whether the grants formerly paid under the Acts of 1889 and 1891 (the administration of which was transferred to the Department of Agriculture by the Act of 1899) are now legally available upon the same conditions as previously. Pending consideration of the matter, however, a tentative arrangement has been made by which a grant in aid will be paid for three years. The amount payable by the Department from this grant to the four institutions in the County Galway which have availed themselves of the provisions of the Acts of 1889 and 1891 was £610, not £407. The former is the equivalent of the amount of the rate actually applied for the purposes mentioned.

Limerick Postal Staff.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state the circumstances

under which three assistant superintendents have lately been introduced into the Limerick postal branch from outside offices and promoted over the heads of local officers; what special qualifications do the imported officials possess, and have they been performing the duties to which they were appointed; and, in the inquiry which has been promised, will the evidence of the male and female staff be taken.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There being no officer on the class of clerks at Limerick competent in all respects to perform the duties of assistant superintendent, it was necessary in the interests of the service to introduce officers from elsewhere to fill the three vacancies for assistant superintendents to which the hon. Member refers. The officers so introduced possess, in the opinion of the Postmaster General, full qualifications for their respective posts, and they are performing the duties proper to the grade to which they have been promoted. The personal inquiry promised into the duties of the indoor staff at Limerick is now being made, and the necessary evidence of the male and female staff will be taken.

Dr. Barry, Limerick.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the claim of the late Dr. Barry, of Limerick, for compensation for loss sustained by him owing to the office of registrar of births and deaths, held by him, being abolished under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1898; and, if such claim be granted, will the compensation be given to Dr. Barry's widow.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The appeal on behalf of Dr. Barry against the decision of the Limerick Board of Guardians upon his claim was not made to the Treasury within the three months prescribed by Section 120 (4) of the Local Government Act, 1888, as embodied n Part II. of the seventh schedule to the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and consequently the Treasury has no jurisdiction in the case.

The Education Bill.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether an estimate of the increased cost which the local authorities must incur to efficiently administer the Education Bill will be submitted to the House before the Second Reading of the Bill is taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not think it would be possible to give the information the hon. Gentleman desires before the Second Reading of the Bill is taken.

MR. LAMBERT: Could it not be given by the Committee stage?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it is information that can be given.

Supply.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will put down the salary of the First Commissioner of Works for an early day in Supply, as this was one of the Votes closured without discussion last session.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): May I also ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can say when the Local Government Board Vote will be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Supply will not be taken on Friday, and it would be premature to make any announcement as to the arrangement of Supply next week or at any subsequent period.

LORD HUGH CECIL: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a week's notice before the Local Government Vote is taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot promise a week's notice. It is usual to indicate on the Monday or Tuesday what Supply will be taken on the following Friday, and I hope my noble friend will regard that as sufficient.

Discussion on the New Procedure Rules.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury in what order he proposes to take the Procedure

Rules, when the consideration of them is resumed. Does he intend to take them in the order in which they appear on the Notice Paper or in that on a separate Paper which differs from the Notice Paper, or in some other order, and if so, in what order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose, as my hon. friend will have anticipated, to take the new Standing Orders in the succession in which they appear on the separate Paper. When we have completed the Supply Rules we shall deal with that relating to Questions.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to:—Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).

Ordered, That this day the Business of Ways and Means do have precedence to of all other business, including Business of the House (Procedure).—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

(4.28.) Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Business of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 240; Noes, 164. (Division List No. 125.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bullard, Sir Harry
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Lord
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., N.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn L'rd G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'rry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmort'n
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hon. M. W (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C (N'rth'mb. Tyneside
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col Sir C. E H (Sheffield
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Cl. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mappin, Sir Frederic Thorpe
Mather, William
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thompson, Dr. EC (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Wallace and Mr. Soames.

NEW BILLS.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 161.]

EMPLOYERS AND WORKMEN ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Employers and Workmen Act, 1875," presented by Mr. Bell, under Standing Order 31; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Norman, Mr. Fenwick, and Sir Fortescue Flannery; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 14th May, and to be printed. [Bill 162.]

FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Laws relating to the Fisheries of Ireland." Presented by Mr. Seton-Karr, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Hozier, Mr. Parker, Mr. Atherley-Jones and Colonel Nolan; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 163.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS REGISTRATION.

Bill to amend the Law for the Registration of Parliamentary Voters and other purposes relating to elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cremer, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Pickard.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS REGISTRATION BILL.

"To amend the Law for the Registration of Parliamentary Voters and other purposes relating to elections." Presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 164.]

WAYS AND MEANS [14TH APRIL]—REPORT.

Resolution reported.

CUSTOMS—CORN, GRAIN, AND MEAL, &c.

"That there shall be charged on and after the 15th day of April, 1902, the following Customs import duties—

	£	s.	d.
Corn and grain of all kinds, and peas, beans, and lentils . . . . the cwt.	0	0	3
Flour and all kinds of meal and prepared grain, starch, and all farinaceous and starchy substances used as articles of food . the cwt.	0	0	5.'

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*(4.42.) SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I think it will be generally admitted that it will be more convenient that upon this question of the tax on corn, grain and flour no Amendment should be moved, and that we should deal with the question upon a broad issue. After a great many years we have again raised in this Budget the question of the corn laws. My right

hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth, the very first moment this tax was proposed, declared emphatically that it was his intention, and the intention of those who sit on this side of the House, to offer the strongest and the most decided opposition to once again placing a tax upon the food of the people of this country. While there will be no Member on this side of the House, whether he sits for a manufacturing or an agricultural constituency, who either by voice or vote will support this iniquitous proposal of His Majesty's Government, we already know from the debates which have taken place that His Majesty's Government cannot depend upon a united following, and that already some of their supporters have announced their intention of voting against the corn duty. I think there will be other hon. Members who will join the three Unionist Members who voted upon the very first opportunity they had against the re-imposition of the corn duties.

We oppose this tax on the ground that it is a tax upon the poorest of the poor, and because it is a tax upon the first necessity of life, and as convinced free traders we see no cause whatever to depart from that doctrine which we have been brought up in, and which we have practised, and which for a generation has been the law of this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that these duties would not affect the price of bread because it was so small. I ask hon. Members whether that is not exactly the old fallacy of the old Protectionists? The right hon. Gentleman again said nobody ever objected to the registration duty on the ground of its being a protective duty. The House will remember that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has prided himself upon the idea that this is not a duty upon corn but that it is a mere administrative registration duty. When the right hon. Gentleman says that nobody ever objected to the registration duty his contention is not founded upon fact. Before the corn registration duty was repealed by the Budget of Mr. Lowe in 1869, that repeal had been the subject for many years of an agitation by free traders, who declared that this duty though small was a hindrance to trade, and it could not be said while that duty existed that this country was one which allowed free imports. [Ministerial cries of "Quote!"]

Sir Edward Strachey.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Will the hon. Baronet quote some authority?

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Yes, I will quote the opinion of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. They sent a deputation asking Mr. Lowe to abolish the registration duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that Mr. Gladstone did not object to this registration duty and did not regard it as a tax upon corn, as a tax upon the food of the people, or an interference with free trade. But in 1866, three years before the registration duty was repealed, Mr. Gladstone in reply to a memorial from the same Chamber of Commerce said this tax was protective in its nature and one that would not be permanently retained as a source of revenue. I think that shows exactly the true feeling of Mr. Gladstone as regards that matter, and it is just the sort of feeling we on this side of the House should expect on the part of Mr. Gladstone, who was as strong a free trader as any of us. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that the price of bread does not follow small changes and variations. That may be true if you take the small changes and fluctuations of the market from day to day and from week to week. I am ready to grant that that may be so, but that is a very different thing from a permanent increase in the price brought about by the imposition of a duty which will not vary from day to day, but will go on from year to year as a permanent tax, and the consequence will be naturally that the price which is to be paid will be permanently increased by the duty put on by the Government. It is all very well for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to declare that this is a small duty, and that therefore it will be innocuous in its effect upon prices. But the baker will not be able to charge $\frac{1}{8}$d. or $\frac{1}{16}$d. for the reason that there is no coin of the realm of that kind. He must of necessity, in order to meet the extra charge which is put on the price of flour as a permanent charge, either charge $\frac{1}{4}$d. or $\frac{1}{2}$d. more per quartern loaf, and as a matter of fact this is exactly what the bakers are doing. Already in London there has been an increase in the price of the quartern loaf of $\frac{1}{2}$d., and I see it reported that in some

districts actually the price is increased by a 1d., showing that the bakers are well alive to the fact that they will have to pay more for their flour.

Well, it may be said that the foreigner will pay this. I would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that a paper, which I believe supports His Majesty's Government, the *Economist*, and which has called this Budget a most vicious and reactionary Budget. It says—

"The very convenient theory that the foreigner will pay has been promptly negatived by the advances in the prices of wheat and flour that have taken place since the Budget was introduced. In spite of all Sir M. Hicks Beach had to say thereupon the new duties must constitute a tax upon the food of the people."

Then again, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that the object of His Majesty's Government in the reimposition of the tax upon corn and flour is to broaden the basis of indirect taxation. He says it is not a war tax. It is not a tax which the country is asked to submit to on the ground that it is a hateful necessity when we are at war, and because we are so crippled in our resources that it is absolutely necessary to tax the bread of the people, and to tax the feeding stuffs of the farmers. Well, free trader as I am, I admit that if His Majesty's Government had come down here and said that, in consequence of the war and of the great difficulty we were in, that we were on our knees, and that it was a matter of life and death, I, for one, having always supported the Government in carrying on the war, and having been always ready to support them in every possible way in carrying on the fight to the finish, would have voted for this tax, but it would have been only, under such circumstances, as an absolutely hateful necessity. But that is not the case at the present moment. We are not asked to vote this tax for the purpose of carrying on the war. There is no difficulty in this great and powerful country carrying on the war to a successful issue without descending to the mean necessity of taxing the poor man's bread. But it is to be a means of broadening the basis of taxation. That may be necessary because of the extravagant way in which His Majesty's Government have spent the money of the taxpayer, quite apart from the war. In addition to the Sinking Fund now suspended, the annual expenditure has increased by 32 millions. This was recognised by the Junior Member for Oldham, who said—

"Besides, when the war was over, the Sinking Fund would have to be revived, and the income tax reduced. In fact, future expenditure meant serious taxation of bread and meat, and other necessaries of the people. It also meant the raising of Fair Trade issues. (VINCENT: Hear, hear!) A tax honestly imposed merely for revenue would become Protective in its character."

Then, again, the sentiment that this is a Protectionist tax is recognised by my hon. friend the Member for Lincoln. He said—

"It was Protection of the worse kind. When they saw with what pleasure and gratitude it was received in certain quarters, it was difficult not to say it was not Protective to a great extent."

Well, it is clear that even on the Government side of the House, as well as on this, it is recognised that this is a Protectionist tax, and the object of it not so much to raise revenue as to insert the thin end of the wedge in order that we may once more return to Protection not only of corn and flour, but probably of all kinds of food and manufactured articles as well. I am glad to notice that exactly the same view is taken by the great newspaper which represents the Liberal Unionists in the Midlands. Referring to the Budget Speech of the Chancellor, the *Birmingham Daily Post* says—

"The remedial measures he prescribes for the national exigencies display little resource for ingenuity, and are calculated, we think, to inflict the maximum suffering for the minimum result. . . . His proposed corn duty is, nevertheless, a reactionary measure, because it is not only a tax upon food, but one that will impose a burden upon consumers out of all proportion to the gain to the Exchequer. In other words, the middleman will share with the Government in the proceeds of the new impost, and his portion will assuredly not be the smaller one."

If this is only a revenue tax, and not a Protective duty, I think we might very well ask—Why not tax other imports? Why not tax meat, bacon, pork, butter, cheese, and margarine; and also cattle and sheep which are imported for slaughter for the purpose of food? If the Government honestly say, "We have no idea of Protection; this is not Protection at all," why have they left out all

the other agricultural produce coming from abroad? It is not the case that they are of little value.

Its value is over £76,000,000 as against £61,000,000 value of corn, grain, flour and meal.

If the Government had put a duty on meat and dairy produce, they would get double the amount they are asking for, reckoned on the *ad valorem* duty. I am not for one moment saying that that ought to be done. I think we, as agriculturists, must not oppose free imports, whether they be corn, meat, or dairy produce, because I believe this country will not give up the great advantages of free trade. If those advantages are given full play, and the greatest opportunity taken of them, farmers in this matter need not fear. I think it is very significant the way in which in the last ten or twenty years in this country farmers have turned to the producing of dairy produce and the raising of stock in order that they may make this country, as regards stock, one in which pedigree animals are raised—a country to which buyers come from South America and all over the world and give large prices to breeders. This can only be done by farmers having free imports of feeding stuffs for their animals, whether for stock or dairy produce. That is shown by the fact that agriculturists in the West of England, a part of which I represent, recognise this fact. Only in the last few days I have got a copy of a petition which has been, or will shortly be, sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The petition emanates from a body called the Western Counties Co-operative Agricultural Association, which embraces my own county of Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire. That is an association of landlords and farmers working on co-operative principles, and not for profit. Only 5 per cent. is allowed on the shares, and the rest is divided as a bonus among the purchasers. Now, what is the attitude of these owners and occupiers? They entirely oppose the duty upon feeding stuffs, and the line they take is that the tax will constitute a heavy burden on the farmers of the counties referred to.

Sir Edward Strachey.

It may interest the House to know what are the actual amounts imported of offals used for feeding stock into this country—

IMPORTED OFFALS, 8s. 4d. A TON.

	Tons.
Wheat Offals ...	128,700
Other Offals ...	150,000
Rice Meals ...	150,000
	428,700 = £211,958

We shall have in future this tax of 5s. on grain and 8s. 4d. on milled feeding stuffs, and at the same time we shall have to compete with foreign countries, such as Denmark, where there is no tax of this kind. The dairy farmer in England who makes butter has now to compete with butter coming from Denmark, and in doing so in the future he will have an additional tax of 8s. 4d. on all the feeding stuffs he takes to further increase the difficulties of such competition. In Denmark the farmer will be able to import identically the same feeding stuffs as the British farmer without an import tax, and thereby getting his feeding stuffs 8s. 4d. a ton cheaper. There again the House will see that it is a serious tax. The Exchequer is giving a bounty to the Danish farmer, because this tax will enable him to send butter here from his cows fed on untaxed feeding stuffs to compete with that made in this country. That is exactly the same case with Holland. In Germany there is a duty on corn of 50s. a ton and 105s. a ton flour, yet as far as the farmer is concerned they quite recognise that it is of the utmost importance, if he is to compete with other countries abroad, he should be enabled to get feeding stuffs at a low price without any duty. It is important to the farmer that his food stuffs should be imported absolutely free of duty. I have quoted the case of Denmark as a competitor in butter. There is also France, which competes with us very much, too, in the matter of butter. Their wheat duty is 56s. per ton, and flour rises from 80s. to 128s. per ton. Offals are allowed to be imported at the comparatively small price of 4s. 10d. Even in France itself, with high Protective duties, the farmer pays 3s. 6d. per ton less than the English farmer, and will thus be at an advantage in producing his butter. Then, undoubtedly, those countries which at the present moment send large exports of feeding stuffs to

this country, such as South America, Canada, and India, finding that our markets are shut to them, will be compelled to send to Denmark and Germany, where there is free import, with the result that the price will go down in those markets and we will get even cheaper feeding stuffs than now. The English farmer will be handicapped from the agricultural point of view. You may say that the effect of the 8s. 4d. per ton will be to increase the cost of production of meat and bacon and dairy products.

Now, what is it really that His Majesty's Government are doing? They are once more raising the old banner and the old cry of "Protection." They are playing into the hands of Gentlemen like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, who have in the past advocated a duty of 5s. on every quarter of corn.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I never advocated a specific duty on corn.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I quite understand that the right hon. Gentleman would prefer a sliding scale going much higher; but I desire to rather understate than overstate the case. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division some years ago dealt with this question in a very straightforward manner at a great meeting of farmers at Lincoln. He said on that occasion—

"With regard to foreign competition, the remedy which he knew perfectly well would find favour in their eyes before all others was Protection. On that point he would add nothing to what he had said in London, but they must not suppose for a moment he was in any degree hostile to protection. On the contrary, all his sympathies were very much with them, and very much in that direction."

When the right hon. Gentleman was President of the Local Government Board he spoke in 1899 at an agricultural dinner in the park of the Postmaster General in the North of England. He referred to the question of a duty on corn, and he suggested that it might be well to impose a duty of a shilling on corn in order to form a fund for old age pensions. That suggestion very much alarmed many hon. Members on both sides of the House; because many of us, although very anxious to have old age pensions established, were not prepared to abandon our Free Trade principles for them. We were not prepared to say that it was desirable to tax the working man's bread during his youth and the time he was able to work, in order to provide him with a pension in old age. That suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman is very important, viewed in the light of the present day. It was delivered in the presence of another Cabinet Minister, and has never been repudiated by any Cabinet Minister. The *Spectator* newspaper, though it has always advocated Free Trade principles, supports the Government, but it now even says that it would have been much better if the Government had chosen some other tax. Commenting on that particular suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, the *Spectator* said it hoped some Member of the Cabinet would take the first opportunity of repudiating the idea of a tax on corn, however small. That suggestion was never repudiated, and we can now quite well understand why it was not. However, what was more significant still, the hon. Baronet the Conservative Member for Wigan, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, wrote to the *Times* in August, 1899, a letter, in which he said—

"For my own part I should feel bound to resist to the uttermost any duty on corn supplied to my hard-working constituents, and sincerely hope that the Government will take warning in time and will not submit so fatal a proposal to the House of Commons."

The Government are now supporting this proposal. The hon. Baronet proceeded—

"Representing as I do a large industrial constituency, I feel that I should be failing in my duty if I did not, at the earliest opportunity, make a firm although most respectful protest against such a proposal."

This is the important point in the hon. Baronet's letter—

"There must be no duty, no Custom-house officer, between the corn at the ports of Liverpool and Manchester and the Lancashire population."

Commenting on this important letter of the hon. Baronet, the *Spectator* said—

"No better confirmation could be found for the anxiety we have expressed elsewhere in regard to Mr. Chaplin's reckless and unfortunate scheme for a renewal of the Corn Laws, and we most sincerely hope that the next member of the Cabinet who speaks in public will reassure Unionist opinion by repudiating all idea of a tax on corn, however small."

I ask hon. Members on this side of the House, is there anyone who will differ from that declaration that there must be no Customs officer and no duty between our constituents and the ports of this country through which corn enters. I will not venture further to trespass on the time of the House. I will only again say, as a Free Trader, I most strongly oppose this tax, which undoubtedly in its incidence, as the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigan pointed out, must fall on the working classes. I also oppose it as a farmer, knowing from practical knowledge that our remedy for agricultural depression is not Protection in these days but dairy farming, stock breeding and grazing, and the production of milk, which at the present moment is the one article we can produce without having to meet competition from abroad. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer really intends to carry this duty, we are to be further handicapped by having this heavy tax of 8s. 4d. a ton put on feeding stuffs. I venture to protest on behalf of my fellow agriculturists against this tax, as one that will seriously cripple our most paying industry, milk selling, and which up to now has had no competition from abroad.

*(5.13.) MR. A. B. LAW (Glasgow, Blackfriars): As my hon. friend and colleague one of the Members for Glasgow spoke yesterday against this tax, I am very glad to have an opportunity of saying a few words in its favour. Hon. Members who have spoken against this tax have tried to persuade themselves that this Budget provokes the old controversy between Free Trade and Protection. Of course there are people in this country with whom the principles of Free Trade have assumed all the sanctity of a religion, and as happens with all religions there has grown up around Free Trade a bundle of superstitions not less tenaciously held than the central doctrines themselves. Among the superstitions associated with Free Trade is the idea that it is wrong, indeed almost sacrilegious, to tax particular commodities. But, surely, if it is admitted that indirect taxation is necessary, and that a particular tax is not in its effect Protective, then the wisdom or unwisdom of that tax is not a question of principle but a matter of expediency. I think everyone will agree with the principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech, that in imposing indirect taxation it was his duty to put the tax on as few articles as possible, to tax nothing which did not yield an amount of money worth collecting, and above all to disturb the trade of the country as little as possible. I think it would be extremely difficult to find any tax which would better fulfil these conditions than the tax we are now discussing. Everyone admits it is convenient. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields admitted its convenience so fully that he referred to that as an argument against the tax, because it was so very convenient that it would be a temptation to future Chancellors of the Exchequer. What is the inference? That, in the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the proper indirect taxation is taxation that is not convenient and which therefore presents no such temptation. It is quite possible that the struggle between Free Trade and Protection may come again in this country, though I hope it will not, but it certainly will not come under the old conditions. I remember two years ago, when American pig iron was first introduced into this country, the leaders of one of the trades unions approached the ironmasters with a view to trying to boycott that import. That is the direction from which the cry of Protection will come, if it ever comes again. It will come from the working man when he sees his employment disappearing and the articles he himself makes made in other countries and sold at his own door at a lower price. It is obvious that the tax on corn will present no temptation to those who desire that kind of Protection. The interest of the working man will still be to get his bread as cheaply as he can, and it will be from other directions that the temptation will come.

I should like to say a few words on the question as to the incidence of this tax. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields — I refer to his arguments, because they were the clearest I heard from hon. Members opposite— pointed out that as this duty was a fixed charge, consequently it meant a permanent addition to the cost of production of the article. That is as obvious as that two and two make four. But does the hon. and learned Member think that because he has proved that, he has proved

also that that additional cost of production must add to the selling price of the article. Such an idea is contrary to the experience of everyone who has dealt in commodities which fluctuate. Take coal, which was discussed at great length in this House last year. Will anyone say that the cost of production is the ruling factor in regulating the selling price of coal? If so, how will it be explained why two years ago the coal masters got profits to the extent of shillings, when they only get profits to the extent of pence as a rule? A coal owner does not say, "Coal costs me so much, and I can sell at such and such a price, and make such and such a profit." No, he says, "People want coal, there is a demand for it; what is the highest price I can force people to pay for it?" Take another illustration. Suppose the United States had put an export duty on corn to the same extent as this tax, would the consumer in this country pay for that? Hon. Members opposite last year proved to their own satisfaction that the duty on coal would fall on the exporter, and they cannot say one thing in regard to coal, and an entirely different thing in regard to corn. It is obvious that the price is regulated by supply and demand, and the cost of production has only this indirect effect in the price: if the price is very profitable, the supply increases, if it is unprofitable the supply diminishes. I would ask the House to apply that to the subject we are discussing. This tax can only add to the selling price of grain in this country if the supply is less than it would be if it were not imposed, and it can only add to the selling price to the extent of the supply being diminished on account of this tax. Can anyone contend that 3d. per cwt. will cause land in America or elsewhere to go out of cultivation, or any part of the grain which would ordinarily come to this country to go to other markets which are taxed much more heavily than ours? I do not want to try to prove too much. I do not want to prove that the cost of production will never affect the price of an article; but I think I can say this at all events, that no one who is not blinded by party prejudice, or who looks at this matter impartially, will contend for a moment that the whole of this additional tax will fall on the consumer and none of it on the producer.

Let me look at it from the worst possible point of view. Suppose the whole of this tax falls on the consumer, it will only amount to a quarter of a farthing per 2lb. loaf. Will anyone say that that is an unfair tax, seeing that indirect taxation is necessary, to lay upon the people of this country? I know that the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down says that a halfpenny, and perhaps a penny, will be charged, as our coins are not small enough. But I prefer again to take the argument of the hon. and learned Member for South Shields. He said that as there were no small coins a halfpenny would at least be added to the selling price of the loaf. That is the same hon. and learned Gentleman who, in talking about the cost of production, says that these things are governed by natural laws which are as inevitable as the law of gravitation. What about natural laws now? Do they only apply when they support the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite? Do they cease to operate when they tell against these arguments? Perhaps he thinks that a baker is above these laws; that he is outside the law of gravitation. That is an opinion which has been held at different periods in the history of the world. It was held at the time of the French Revolution, and to some purpose, for in Paris they strung up a baker about every second day in order to lower the price of bread. The hon. Member said the additional charge is half a farthing, but the baker will charge a halfpenny.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): The hon. Gentleman misunderstood what I said. I said one thing must happen—either the added price must be in the form of a known coin of the realm, or the loaf must be diminished in size; and the added price would depend, not only upon the amount of the tax, but also upon the extra capital called into the business in order to pay the tax, and the general derangement of business caused by the tax.

*MR. A. B. LAW: I do not think I misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. My recollection is that he said the baker would charge a halfpenny profit. Other Gentlemen opposite made exactly the

same statement, and I am quite willing to meet it. This means an additional profit on what bakers are making now of fully twenty per cent. If that were possible, should not we all become bakers? Why, Sir, whatever else is possible, this at least is certain—that the additional cost to the loaf will not on the average exceed the additional cost which the baker has to pay for it. I notice there was a good deal of enthusiasm among hon. Gentlemen opposite. They imagine they are going to raise the country to the old agitation. They are going, perhaps, to send out pictures of the big loaf and the little loaf. If that is their idea, I would say to them that they are like what was said of the Stuarts: they have learned nothing and have forgotten nothing. Times have changed—such an agitation would be an artificial agitation; it would deceive nobody, it would excite nobody.

(5.26.) SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I have listened with great pleasure to the exceedingly eloquent speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down; but, if he will allow me to say so, I think he stated rather apologetically there was a danger of his proving too much, and I think he fell into that danger before he called our attention to it. He was running on two parallel lines, which could never, I think, cross one another, in reference to the cost of manufacturing an article. The cost of its production, I venture to submit, must consist of the cost of the raw material, of the cost of the labour employed, and of the interest upon the capital necessary for the carrying out of that industry. These are fixed, invariable laws from which there can be no departure. This cost will vary from time to time according to the varying conditions of the market. On the other hand, he is perfectly right in saying that the ultimate sale or non-sale of that article will depend upon the supply and demand; if there is an excess of supply over demand, the price will fall; but if the demand is larger than the supply, the price will rise. But these are two totally distinct considerations which do not cross one another at all with reference to a question of this description. What we have to consider in this case is his allegation that this tax does not fall upon the consumer, and that it will not really affect the price of the article. I must make one other remark to the hon. Gentleman. He said we were attempting to revive the great controversies of bygone years, and that if the arguments which were so powerful in the mouths of Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Gladstone, and of their great *confreres*, were brought up today, they would meet with no response. Well, I venture to tell him that the arguments he has used in the House of Commons this evening were used in the House of Commons in the year 1846. They are precisely the same arguments Mr. Cobden and Sir Robert Peel were met with in those days; and I think the verdict the country gave then, and from which the country has never flinched since then—the Chancellor of the Exchequer bases his proposals on the contention that they are not a departure from that verdict—I think the same verdict would be given again if it were called for in the same conditions.

Now, Sir, I come to the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in framing this tax. I notice that, both last night and the night before, he appealed on these proposals to the two great authorities—Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone. He was walking in their steps, preaching their doctrine; and he said whatever fallacy was to be found in his argument was to be found in theirs. Now, I should like to challenge that statement at once, and I should like the House to consider the true position which Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone took on this occasion. When Sir Robert Peel was dealing with his great measure in 1846 it was not a question of revenue—it was a question of Protection. Under the Protective system which then prevailed the object was not to get revenue. An exceedingly small amount was received from the corn duty during Sir Robert Peel's lifetime. The object was to keep corn out of the country.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): No, no; to equalise the price.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Yes, up to a certain figure—to ensure that it should not go below a certain figure. Now, Sir Robert Peel, it is perfectly true, put on for the purposes of registration 1s. a quarter on wheat, and at that time the nation was much more anxious

to get rid of Protective duties than to obtain revenue. My own opinion is that Sir Robert Peel regarded it entirely as a registration duty and nothing else, and, having regard to ascertaining what foreign corn would come in and what would not, he placed a registration duty on corn. When the three years had elapsed, during which he had reduced and finally abolished the corn laws, the duty of 1s. was to come into force. The imports of wheat and flour that were brought into this country then amounted to 35,000,000 cwt. The imports of wheat and flour for 1900, which was the last year for which we have a Return from the Board of Trade, amounted to 189,636,000 cwt. In dealing with this matter, the question to be asked with regard to Sir Robert Peel is this — What would Sir Robert Peel have done if he had conceived the possibility that the time would arrive in this country when proposals would be made in this House to put a tax on corn which would produce between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000? That he would never have regarded with anything but the strongest dislike. That is a speculation with regard to Sir Robert Peel; but with regard to Mr. Gladstone's attitude, that is very clear. The right hon. Gentleman said that Mr. Gladstone remained in office for many years, and was always a great Free Trader, and did nothing to remove this tax. Let us go into the figures. Sir Robert Peel was in office in 1849. Mr. Gladstone was not in office until 1853, when he came in as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He then produced his celebrated Budget, with its great fiscal changes, which altered the whole system of taxation with regard to imports—the greatest Budget, in my opinion, that was ever brought into this House; and this duty was too trifling to take any notice of. What was £500,000 a year to Mr. Gladstone in the great changes he was making n the financial policy of this country? He was imposing fresh taxes on the country in order to free the springs of industry in other directions. But soon after he came into office, he, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was faced with a war. This tax had fallen then to £300,000, and that was the sum to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer alluded as the contribution to the Crimean war. In 1855 Mr. Gladstone went out of office, and he did not return until 1859, when he had again to undertake the completion of this great financial policy. In 1864 this question was raised in the House for the first time and for the distinct purpose of altering this duty, and Mr Gladstone very promptly and clearly dealt with this question, and left on permanent record what his view was. He said—

"The acceptance of the proposal to re-model the duties would appear as if we were deliberately setting about the construction of a regular system of corn duties."

This was on a reduction of 3d. to 2d. on a certain class of wheat. This was Mr. Gladstone's reason for refusing to accept the proposal. He said—

"I should be reluctant to see Parliament committed to any plan which might appear to assume that a duty of this kind on corn (not a very heavy impost, but still something more than a nominal one, which in principle it would be difficult to defend) should be regarded as a permanent imposition upon the greatest article of human subsistence among us."

Now, to say that Mr. Gladstone sanctioned such a proposal is obviously incorrect. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer dissented.] That was in 1864. In 1865 Mr. Gladstone left office, and he did not return until 1868 when, for the first time, he was Prime Minister, and Mr. Lowe was his Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the very first year of his Premiership Mr. Lowe brought in his Budget and removed this tax. It would be impertinent to lift the veil which shrouds the proceedings of the present Cabinet. We do not know who is responsible for some of the steps which are taken and upon which we look with wonder and amazement. We do not know whether it is the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Budget of the Cabinet. But those of us who had the honour of being colleagues with Mr. Gladstone know that no Chancellor of the Exchequer under him ever submitted any financial proposals to the House of Commons that had not his full approval, and we may take it as proved to demonstration that that was Mr. Gladstone's Budget and not the Budget of Mr. Lowe, and that in reality it was Mr. Gladstone who removed the shilling duty on corn, though Mr. Lowe has been held up to us

as rather a sort of financial pedant for so doing. Let me read what Mr. Lowe said when he asked the House to abolish the tax, and what were the grounds on which Parliament accepted it in 1869, and adopted it as our uniform policy from that year down to 1902. Mr. Lowe said it was clearly the intention of its founder that this tax should operate only as a register, but that it had really ceased to do so and had now come to be regarded as a source of revenue. The amount received from it at that time was £800,000 or £900,000.

"And what sort of a source of revenue is it? It is impossible to imagine any tax which combines more of the qualities which make a tax odious—that is, it is a duty on an article that is produced in England with no countervailing Excise duty upon it; it is, therefore, effectual as a Protective duty—that is to say, it not merely raises the price of the portion of the article that pays it, but also raises the price of the portion of the article that does not pay it. It therefore inflicts on the subject a burden much more considerable than the benefit it confers on the Revenue. If we want to get at the real evils of the tax, let us imagine ourselves applying to it the same rules that we apply to all other Protective taxes and put a countervailing Excise duty on the home-grown article. Just fancy the Excise man let loose upon the barns and the stores of the farmer and the corn-dealer, collecting a tax of 3d. per cwt. on their corn all over the country."

That, of course, is Mr. Lowe's opinion; he was a very great authority on these matters, and I commend it to the House for its consideration. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was no evidence that there was any reduction in price by the abolition of the tax—that bread was no cheaper, and that wheat was no cheaper; but I venture to submit for his consideration that that is no proof that the price would not be raised if the tax was re-imposed. To take off a tax is one thing; to put it on again is another, and a very different, process. As a matter of fact, the process is often gradual, before the price of an article falls, and some time necessarily elapses: but the moment a tax is imposed, say, in addition to the tax on tea, within twenty-four hours the price is raised in respect of the article upon which the tax is to be levied.

That brings me now to the question which has been raised and argued with so much ability by the hon. Member opposite—By whom is the duty paid? Now, somebody is going to pay it. It is not going to drop from the clouds, and it is not going to grow up from the earth. In one shape or another, the Chancellor of the Exchequer expects to get 2,600,000 additional sovereigns into the Bank of England. Who is going to pay, then? [An HON. MEMBER: The foreigner.] The foreigner? I remember once asking in the House, who pays the additional tax upon tea, and the hon. Member for Central Sheffield immediately answered me and said the exporters would pay it—it would be paid by the Chinese exporter.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): No, no. My right hon. friend's memory deceives him. I said that in the case of tea, the consumer paid, because we produce no tea whatever in this country.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I am delighted to hear that the hon. Member holds that opinion now; but I remember very well that I asked him whether, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put 6d. on tea in his Budget, the price of tea would not have been raised 6d. in every grocer's shop the following morning. Possibly that illustration made some impression upon him.

The price of wheat and the price of flour, after all, is the market price of the world. There is practically for all purposes but one corn market in the world. You will get neither more nor less for your wheat here, in New York, or San Francisco, than the price of wheat in the market of the world at the day; and the wholesale importer who buys wheat at the market price, subject to a duty, has, before he sells it either to the merchant or retailer—I quote the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year in dealing with the sugar duty—

"He has to pay for the Customs handling, for the expense of agency, for the interest on the duty, and any other charges which he may have to bear."

Those must all be added to the duty. There must be an addition to capital. Of course, corn and flour are imported in enormous quantities by merchants with very large establishments, and very large sums are paid. At all events, somebody will have to find money to pay for the interest on this sum of

£2,630,000 which is to be extracted from the article. In the case of wheat and flour this operation will be repeated more than once. The original importer will have to be recompensed for this burden; the large merchant to whom he sells will also have to be re-imbursed, and so on; and we know that when it is a case of re-imbursing, there is a tendency to put on a little additional profit to cover the loss and the risk they have to incur. Then, when you come to the baker, the same process will be repeated. To attempt to measure the burden on wheat or flour by the figures we are going to vote for tonight in this Resolution, is a fallacy. You must add the cost of manipulating, the cost of advancing money, and the cost of additional risk in respect of bad debts. I think my hon. friend the Member for South Somersetshire, and the hon. Member for South Shields, put the case very fairly—I think very much under the mark—when they mentioned the figure which they did. An hon. Member said with great truth that you could not make an addition to the price less than that of the current coin of the realm. The difference may be an eighth of a penny or a fourth of a penny, but the trade of this country will, in dealing with the retail article, recognise the halfpenny as the smallest coin. ["A farthing."] No, I say a halfpenny. It is a question of opinion, but I think if any addition is made to the price of the quartern loaf it will be an addition of a halfpenny, and I think a halfpenny will be requisite in this case to cover all the cost. It is easy to smile at halfpennies and farthings. The wages of this country are paid in shillings. The coins which are perhaps most familiar to Members of this House are unknown to the vast mass of the population, so far as their practical use is concerned. When you levy a tax upon bread, although it may be in farthings, still it is, as Mr. Gladstone put it, upon the greatest article of human subsistence, and if people are mainly eating bread, that tax will amount to a very serious sum to them, although it may seem a very small sum to us. I cordially endorse what has been already said—that this is a tax upon the poorest of the poor, and that they will have to pay it.

I have another objection to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It has been argued that, although it may be a violation in theory of the principle of Free Trade, it is not so in practice. What is Free Trade? It certainly is not fair trade. There is an opinion abroad that it is a violation of Free Trade to impose any duty on an imported article. Nothing of the sort. The question of Free Trade does not arise on imposing Customs duties. You may have a system of absolute Free Trade, so far as the principles of Free Trade are concerned, and every variety of Customs duty. No doubt it is embarrassing to business; it is adding to the cost, and trouble, and delay of business transactions; but it in no way affects the principle of Free Trade. The principle of Free Trade is that where a tax is levied on the import of any article from a foreign source, and the same article is made in this country, you should levy an excise duty of equal amount upon the home-made article. If you do not do so, that is a violation of Free Trade. I suppose it is a very small matter to steal a shilling, and a large matter to steal a hundred pounds. But the principle is the same. If you violate Free Trade to the extent of one or two shillings, it is a violation of the principle, notwithstanding the figure. The price is raised all round. It really comes to this—that you are calling upon the consumer to pay upon all corn and flour, whether it be foreign corn directly taxed, or home-grown corn indirectly protected, but the Exchequer will only receive the amount paid on the corn imported. The home-grown corn will not pay, and the foreign-grown corn will pay the duty, and that is to all purposes a Protective duty.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: The home-grown corn will pay rates and taxes.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: The proprietor of home-grown corn may have to pay a variety of other disbursements which the foreign producer does not pay, but that is not the question. The question is the price to the consumer. That is the essence of this Protective legislation. Protective legislation is the taxation of all consumers for the benefit of a class. You have the burdens of a tax levied on

hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth, the very first moment this tax was proposed, declared emphatically that it was his intention, and the intention of those who sit on this side of the House, to offer the strongest and the most decided opposition to once again placing a tax upon the food of the people of this country. While there will be no Member on this side of the House, whether he sits for a manufacturing or an agricultural constituency, who either by voice or vote will support this iniquitous proposal of His Majesty's Government, we already know from the debates which have taken place that His Majesty's Government cannot depend upon a united following, and that already some of their supporters have announced their intention of voting against the corn duty. I think there will be other hon. Members who will join the three Unionist Members who voted upon the very first opportunity they had against the re-imposition of the corn duties.

We oppose this tax on the ground that it is a tax upon the poorest of the poor, and because it is a tax upon the first necessity of life, and as convinced free traders we see no cause whatever to depart from that doctrine which we have been brought up in, and which we have practised, and which for a generation has been the law of this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that these duties would not affect the price of bread because it was so small. I ask hon. Members whether that is not exactly the old fallacy of the old Protectionists? The right hon. Gentleman again said nobody ever objected to the registration duty on the ground of its being a protective duty. The House will remember that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has prided himself upon the idea that this is not a duty upon corn but that it is a mere administrative registration duty. When the right hon. Gentleman says that nobody ever objected to the registration duty his contention is not founded upon fact. Before the corn registration duty was repealed by the Budget of Mr. Lowe in 1869, that repeal had been the subject for many years of an agitation by free traders, who declared that this duty though small was a hindrance to trade, and it could not be said while that duty existed that this country was one which allowed free imports. [Ministerial cries of "Quote!"]

Sir Edward Strachey.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Will the hon. Baronet quote some authority?

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Yes, I will quote the opinion of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. They sent a deputation asking Mr. Lowe to abolish the registration duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that Mr. Gladstone did not object to this registration duty and did not regard it as a tax upon corn, as a tax upon the food of the people, or an interference with free trade. But in 1866, three years before the registration duty was repealed, Mr. Gladstone in reply to a memorial from the same Chamber of Commerce said this tax was protective in its nature and one that would not be permanently retained as a source of revenue. I think that shows exactly the true feeling of Mr. Gladstone as regards that matter, and it is just the sort of feeling we on this side of the House should expect on the part of Mr. Gladstone, who was as strong a free trader as any of us. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that the price of bread does not follow small changes and variations. That may be true if you take the small changes and fluctuations of the market from day to day and from week to week. I am ready to grant that that may be so, but that is a very different thing from a permanent increase in the price brought about by the imposition of a duty which will not vary from day to day, but will go on from year to year as a permanent tax, and the consequence will be naturally that the price which is to be paid will be permanently increased by the duty put on by the Government. It is all very well for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to declare that this is a small duty, and that therefore it will be innocuous in its effect upon prices. But the baker will not be able to charge $\frac{1}{8}$d. or $\frac{1}{16}$d. for the reason that there is no coin of the realm of that kind. He must of necessity, in order to meet the extra charge which is put on the price of flour as a permanent charge, either charge $\frac{1}{4}$d. or $\frac{1}{2}$d. more per quartern loaf, and as a matter of fact this is exactly what the bakers are doing. Already in London there has been an increase in the price of the quartern loaf of $\frac{1}{2}$d., and I see it reported that in some

districts actually the price is increased by a 1d., showing that the bakers are well alive to the fact that they will have to pay more for their flour.

Well, it may be said that the foreigner will pay this. I would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that a paper, which I believe supports His Majesty's Government, the *Economist*, and which has called this Budget a most vicious and reactionary Budget. It says—

"The very convenient theory that the foreigner will pay has been promptly negatived by the advances in the prices of wheat and flour that have taken place since the Budget was introduced. In spite of all Sir M. Hicks Beach had to say thereupon the new duties must constitute a tax upon the food of the people."

Then again, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that the object of His Majesty's Government in the reimposition of the tax upon corn and flour is to broaden the basis of indirect taxation. He says it is not a war tax. It is not a tax which the country is asked to submit to on the ground that it is a hateful necessity when we are at war, and because we are so crippled in our resources that it is absolutely necessary to tax the bread of the people, and to tax the feeding stuffs of the farmers. Well, free trader as I am, I admit that if His Majesty's Government had come down here and said that, in consequence of the war and of the great difficulty we were in, that we were on our knees, and that it was a matter of life and death, I, for one, having always supported the Government in carrying on the war, and having been always ready to support them in every possible way in carrying on the fight to the finish, would have voted for this tax, but it would have been only, under such circumstances, as an absolutely hateful necessity. But that is not the case at the present moment. We are not asked to vote this tax for the purpose of carrying on the war. There is no difficulty in this great and powerful country carrying on the war to a successful issue without descending to the mean necessity of taxing the poor man's bread. But it is to be a means of broadening the basis of taxation. That may be necessary because of the extravagant way in which His Majesty's Government have spent the money of the taxpayer, quite apart from the war. In addition to the Sinking Fund now suspended, the annual expenditure has increased by 32 millions. This was recognised by the Junior Member for Oldham, who said—

"Besides, when the war was over, the Sinking Fund would have to be revived, and the income tax reduced. In fact, future expenditure meant serious taxation of bread and meat, and other necessaries of the people. It also meant the raising of Fair Trade issues. (VINCENT: Hear, hear!) A tax honestly imposed merely for revenue would become Protective in its character."

Then, again, the sentiment that this is a Protectionist tax is recognised by my hon. friend the Member for Lincoln. He said—

"It was Protection of the worse kind. When they saw with what pleasure and gratitude it was received in certain quarters, it was difficult not to say it was not Protective to a great extent."

Well, it is clear that even on the Government side of the House, as well as on this, it is recognised that this is a Protectionist tax, and the object of it not so much to raise revenue as to insert the thin end of the wedge in order that we may once more return to Protection not only of corn and flour, but probably of all kinds of food and manufactured articles as well. I am glad to notice that exactly the same view is taken by the great newspaper which represents the Liberal Unionists in the Midlands. Referring to the Budget Speech of the Chancellor, the *Birmingham Daily Post* says—

"The remedial measures he prescribes for the national exigencies display little resource for ingenuity, and are calculated, we think, to inflict the maximum suffering for the minimum result. . . . His proposed corn duty is, nevertheless, a reactionary measure, because it is not only a tax upon food, but one that will impose a burden upon consumers out of all proportion to the gain to the Exchequer. In other words, the middleman will share with the Government in the proceeds of the new impost, and his portion will assuredly not be the smaller one."

If this is only a revenue tax, and not a Protective duty, I think we might very well ask—Why not tax other imports? Why not tax meat, bacon, pork, butter, cheese, and margarine; and also cattle and sheep which are imported for slaughter for the purpose of food? If the Government honestly say, "We have no idea of Protection; this is not Protection at all," why have they left out all

the other agricultural produce coming from abroad? It is not the case that they are of little value.

Its value is over £76,000,000 as against £61,000,000 value of corn, grain, flour and meal.

If the Government had put a duty on meat and dairy produce, they would get double the amount they are asking for, reckoned on the *ad valorem* duty. I am not for one moment saying that that ought to be done. I think we, as agriculturists, must not oppose free imports, whether they be corn, meat, or dairy produce, because I believe this country will not give up the great advantages of free trade. If those advantages are given full play, and the greatest opportunity taken of them, farmers in this matter need not fear. I think it is very significant the way in which in the last ten or twenty years in this country farmers have turned to the producing of dairy produce and the raising of stock in order that they may make this country, as regards stock, one in which pedigree animals are raised—a country to which buyers come from South America and all over the world and give large prices to breeders. This can only be done by farmers having free imports of feeding stuffs for their animals, whether for stock or dairy produce. That is shown by the fact that agriculturists in the West of England, a part of which I represent, recognise this fact. Only in the last few days I have got a copy of a petition which has been, or will shortly be, sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The petition emanates from a body called the Western Counties Co-operative Agricultural Association, which embraces my own county of Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire. That is an association of landlords and farmers working on co-operative principles, and not for profit. Only 5 per cent. is allowed on the shares, and the rest is divided as a bonus among the purchasers. Now, what is the attitude of these owners and occupiers? They entirely oppose the duty upon feeding stuffs, and the line they take is that the tax will constitute a heavy burden on the farmers of the counties referred to.

Sir Edward Strachey.

It may interest the House to know what are the actual amounts imported of offals used for feeding stock into this country—

IMPORTED OFFALS, 8s. 4d. A TON.

		Tons.
Wheat Offals	...	128,700
Other Offals	...	150,000
Rice Meals	...	150,000
		428,700 = £211,958

We shall have in future this tax of 5s. on grain and 8s. 4d. on milled feeding stuffs, and at the same time we shall have to compete with foreign countries, such as Denmark, where there is no tax of this kind. The dairy farmer in England who makes butter has now to compete with butter coming from Denmark, and in doing so in the future he will have an additional tax of 8s. 4d. on all the feeding stuffs he takes to further increase the difficulties of such competition. In Denmark the farmer will be able to import identically the same feeding stuffs as the British farmer without an import tax, and thereby getting his feeding stuffs 8s. 4d. a ton cheaper. There again the House will see that it is a serious tax. The Exchequer is giving a bounty to the Danish farmer, because this tax will enable him to send butter here from his cows fed on untaxed feeding stuffs to compete with that made in this country. That is exactly the same case with Holland. In Germany there is a duty on corn of 50s. a ton and 105s. a ton flour, yet as far as the farmer is concerned they quite recognise that it is of the utmost importance, if he is to compete with other countries abroad, he should be enabled to get feeding stuffs at a low price without any duty. It is important to the farmer that his food stuffs should be imported absolutely free of duty. I have quoted the case of Denmark as a competitor in butter. There is also France, which competes with us very much, too, in the matter of butter. Their wheat duty is 56s. per ton, and flour rises from 80s. to 128s. per ton. Offals are allowed to be imported at the comparatively small price of 4s. 10d. Even in France itself, with high Protective duties, the farmer pays 3s. 6d. per ton less than the English farmer, and will thus be at an advantage in producing his butter. Then, undoubtedly, those countries which at the present moment send large exports of feeding stuffs to

this country, such as South America, Canada, and India, finding that our markets are shut to them, will be compelled to send to Denmark and Germany, where there is free import, with the result that the price will go down in those markets and we will get even cheaper feeding stuffs than now. The English farmer will be handicapped from the agricultural point of view. You may say that the effect of the 8s. 4d. per ton will be to increase the cost of production of meat and bacon and dairy products.

Now, what is it really that His Majesty's Government are doing? They are once more raising the old banner and the old cry of "Protection." They are playing into the hands of Gentlemen like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, who have in the past advocated a duty of 5s. on every quarter of corn.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I never advocated a specific duty on corn.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I quite understand that the right hon. Gentleman would prefer a sliding scale going much higher; but I desire to rather understate than overstate the case. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division some years ago dealt with this question in a very straightforward manner at a great meeting of farmers at Lincoln. He said on that occasion—

"With regard to foreign competition, the remedy which he knew perfectly well would find favour in their eyes before all others was Protection. On that point he would add nothing to what he had said in London, but they must not suppose for a moment he was in any degree hostile to protection. On the contrary, all his sympathies were very much with them, and very much in that direction."

When the right hon. Gentleman was President of the Local Government Board he spoke in 1899 at an agricultural dinner in the park of the Postmaster General in the North of England. He referred to the question of a duty on corn, and he suggested that it might be well to impose a duty of a shilling on corn in order to form a fund for old age pensions. That suggestion very much alarmed many hon. Members on both sides of the House; because many of us, although very anxious to have old age pensions established, were not prepared to abandon our Free Trade principles for them. We were not prepared to say that it was desirable to tax the working man's bread during his youth and the time he was able to work, in order to provide him with a pension in old age. That suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman is very important, viewed in the light of the present day. It was delivered in the presence of another Cabinet Minister, and has never been repudiated by any Cabinet Minister. The *Spectator* newspaper, though it has always advocated Free Trade principles, supports the Government, but it now even says that it would have been much better if the Government had chosen some other tax. Commenting on that particular suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, the *Spectator* said it hoped some Member of the Cabinet would take the first opportunity of repudiating the idea of a tax on corn, however small. That suggestion was never repudiated, and we can now quite well understand why it was not. However, what was more significant still, the hon. Baronet the Conservative Member for Wigan, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, wrote to the *Times* in August, 1899, a letter, in which he said—

"For my own part I should feel bound to resist to the uttermost any duty on corn supplied to my hard-working constituents, and sincerely hope that the Government will take warning in time and will not submit so fatal a proposal to the House of Commons."

The Government are now supporting this proposal. The hon. Baronet proceeded—

"Representing as I do a large industrial constituency, I feel that I should be failing in my duty if I did not, at the earliest opportunity, make a firm although most respectful protest against such a proposal."

This is the important point in the hon. Baronet's letter—

"There must be no duty, no Custom-house officer, between the corn at the ports of Liverpool and Manchester and the Lancashire population."

Commenting on this important letter of the hon. Baronet, the *Spectator* said—

"No better confirmation could be found for the anxiety we have expressed elsewhere in regard to Mr. Chaplin's reckless and unfortunate scheme for a renewal of the Corn Laws, and we most sincerely hope that the next member of the Cabinet who speaks in public will reassure Unionist opinion by repudiating all idea of a tax on corn, however small."

I ask hon. Members on this side of the House, is there anyone who will differ from that declaration that there must be no Customs officer and no duty between our constituents and the ports of this country through which corn enters. I will not venture further to trespass on the time of the House. I will only again say, as a Free Trader, I most strongly oppose this tax, which undoubtedly in its incidence, as the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigan pointed out, must fall on the working classes. I also oppose it as a farmer, knowing from practical knowledge that our remedy for agricultural depression is not Protection in these days but dairy farming, stock breeding and grazing, and the production of milk, which at the present moment is the one article we can produce without having to meet competition from abroad. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer really intends to carry this duty, we are to be further handicapped by having this heavy tax of 8s. 4d. a ton put on feeding stuffs. I venture to protest on behalf of my fellow agriculturists against this tax, as one that will seriously cripple our most paying industry, milk selling, and which up to now has had no competition from abroad.

*(5.13.) MR. A. B. LAW (Glasgow, Blackfriars): As my hon. friend and colleague one of the Members for Glasgow spoke yesterday against this tax, I am very glad to have an opportunity of saying a few words in its favour. Hon. Members who have spoken against this tax have tried to persuade themselves that this Budget provokes the old controversy between Free Trade and Protection. Of course there are people in this country with whom the principles of Free Trade have assumed all the sanctity of a religion, and as happens with all religions there has grown up around Free Trade a bundle of superstitions not less tenaciously held than the central doctrines themselves. Among the superstitions associated with Free Trade is the idea that it is wrong, indeed almost sacrilegious, to tax particular commodities. But, surely, if it is admitted that indirect taxation is necessary, and that a particular tax is not in its effect Protective, then the wisdom or unwisdom of that tax is not a question of principle but a matter of expediency. I think everyone will agree with the principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech, that in imposing indirect taxation it was his duty to put the tax on as few articles as possible, to tax nothing which did not yield an amount of money worth collecting, and above all to disturb the trade of the country as little as possible. I think it would be extremely difficult to find any tax which would better fulfil these conditions than the tax we are now discussing. Everyone admits it is convenient. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields admitted its convenience so fully that he referred to that as an argument against the tax, because it was so very convenient that it would be a temptation to future Chancellors of the Exchequer. What is the inference? That, in the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the proper indirect taxation is taxation that is not convenient and which therefore presents no such temptation. It is quite possible that the struggle between Free Trade and Protection may come again in this country, though I hope it will not, but it certainly will not come under the old conditions. I remember two years ago, when American pig iron was first introduced into this country, the leaders of one of the trades unions approached the ironmasters with a view to trying to boycott that import. That is the direction from which the cry of Protection will come, if it ever comes again. It will come from the working man when he sees his employment disappearing and the articles he himself makes made in other countries and sold at his own door at a lower price. It is obvious that the tax on corn will present no temptation to those who desire that kind of Protection. The interest of the working man will still be to get his bread as cheaply as he can, and it will be from other directions that the temptation will come.

I should like to say a few words on the question as to the incidence of this tax. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields — I refer to his arguments, because they were the clearest I heard from hon. Members opposite—pointed out that as this duty was a fixed charge, consequently it meant a permanent addition to the cost of production of the article. That is as obvious as that two and two make four. But does the hon. and learned Member think that because he has proved that, he has proved

also that that additional cost of production must add to the selling price of the article. Such an idea is contrary to the experience of everyone who has dealt in commodities which fluctuate. Take coal, which was discussed at great length in this House last year. Will anyone say that the cost of production is the ruling factor in regulating the selling price of coal? If so, how will it be explained why two years ago the coal masters got profits to the extent of shillings, when they only get profits to the extent of pence as a rule? A coal owner does not say, "Coal costs me so much, and I can sell at such and such a price, and make such and such a profit." No, he says, "People want coal, there is a demand for it; what is the highest price I can force people to pay for it?" Take another illustration. Suppose the United States had put an export duty on corn to the same extent as this tax, would the consumer in this country pay for that? Hon. Members opposite last year proved to their own satisfaction that the duty on coal would fall on the exporter, and they cannot say one thing in regard to coal, and an entirely different thing in regard to corn. It is obvious that the price is regulated by supply and demand, and the cost of production has only this indirect effect in the price: if the price is very profitable, the supply increases, if it is unprofitable the supply diminishes. I would ask the House to apply that to the subject we are discussing. This tax can only add to the selling price of grain in this country if the supply is less than it would be if it were not imposed, and it can only add to the selling price to the extent of the supply being diminished on account of this tax. Can anyone contend that 3d. per cwt. will cause land in America or elsewhere to go out of cultivation, or any part of the grain which would ordinarily come to this country to go to other markets which are taxed much more heavily than ours? I do not want to try to prove too much. I do not want to prove that the cost of production will never affect the price of an article; but I think I can say this at all events, that no one who is not blinded by party prejudice, or who looks at this matter impartially, will contend for a moment that the whole of this additional tax will fall on the consumer and none of it on the producer.

Let me look at it from the worst possible point of view. Suppose the whole of this tax falls on the consumer, it will only amount to a quarter of a farthing per 2lb. loaf. Will anyone say that that is an unfair tax, seeing that indirect taxation is necessary, to lay upon the people of this country? I know that the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down says that a halfpenny, and perhaps a penny, will be charged, as our coins are not small enough. But I prefer again to take the argument of the hon. and learned Member for South Shields. He said that as there were no small coins a halfpenny would at least be added to the selling price of the loaf. That is the same hon. and learned Gentleman who, in talking about the cost of production, says that these things are governed by natural laws which are as inevitable as the law of gravitation. What about natural laws now? Do they only apply when they support the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite? Do they cease to operate when they tell against these arguments? Perhaps he thinks that a baker is above these laws; that he is outside the law of gravitation. That is an opinion which has been held at different periods in the history of the world. It was held at the time of the French Revolution, and to some purpose, for in Paris they strung up a baker about every second day in order to lower the price of bread. The hon. Member said the additional charge is half a farthing, but the baker will charge a halfpenny.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): The hon. Gentleman misunderstood what I said. I said one thing must happen—either the added price must be in the form of a known coin of the realm, or the loaf must be diminished in size; and the added price would depend, not only upon the amount of the tax, but also upon the extra capital called into the business in order to pay the tax, and the general derangement of business caused by the tax.

*MR. A. B. LAW: I do not think I misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. My recollection is that he said the baker would charge a halfpenny profit. Other Gentlemen opposite made exactly the

same statement, and I am quite willing to meet it. This means an additional profit on what bakers are making now of fully twenty per cent. If that were possible, should not we all become bakers? Why, Sir, whatever else is possible, this at least is certain—that the additional cost to the loaf will not on the average exceed the additional cost which the baker has to pay for it. I notice there was a good deal of enthusiasm among hon. Gentlemen opposite. They imagine they are going to raise the country to the old agitation. They are going, perhaps, to send out pictures of the big loaf and the little loaf. If that is their idea, I would say to them that they are like what was said of the Stuarts: they have learned nothing and have forgotten nothing. Times have changed—such an agitation would be an artificial agitation; it would deceive nobody, it would excite nobody.

(5.26.) SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I have listened with great pleasure to the exceedingly eloquent speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down; but, if he will allow me to say so, I think he stated rather apologetically there was a danger of his proving too much, and I think he fell into that danger before he called our attention to it. He was running on two parallel lines, which could never, I think, cross one another, in reference to the cost of manufacturing an article. The cost of its production, I venture to submit, must consist of the cost of the raw material, of the cost of the labour employed, and of the interest upon the capital necessary for the carrying out of that industry. These are fixed, invariable laws from which there can be no departure. This cost will vary from time to time according to the varying conditions of the market. On the other hand, he is perfectly right in saying that the ultimate sale or non-sale of that article will depend upon the supply and demand; if there is an excess of supply over demand, the price will fall; but if the demand is larger than the supply, the price will rise. But these are two totally distinct considerations which do not cross one another at all with reference to a question of this description. What we have to consider in this case is his allegation that this tax does not fall upon the consumer, and that it will not really affect the price of the article. I must make one other remark to the hon. Gentleman. He said we were attempting to revive the great controversies of bygone years, and that if the arguments which were so powerful in the mouths of Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Gladstone, and of their great *confreres*, were brought up today, they would meet with no response. Well, I venture to tell him that the arguments he has used in the House of Commons this evening were used in the House of Commons in the year 1846. They are precisely the same arguments Mr. Cobden and Sir Robert Peel were met with in those days; and I think the verdict the country gave then, and from which the country has never flinched since then—the Chancellor of the Exchequer bases his proposals on the contention that they are not a departure from that verdict—I think the same verdict would be given again if it were called for in the same conditions.

Now, Sir, I come to the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in framing this tax. I notice that, both last night and the night before, he appealed on these proposals to the two great authorities—Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone. He was walking in their steps, preaching their doctrine; and he said whatever fallacy was to be found in his argument was to be found in theirs. Now, I should like to challenge that statement at once, and I should like the House to consider the true position which Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone took on this occasion. When Sir Robert Peel was dealing with his great measure in 1846 it was not a question of revenue—it was a question of Protection. Under the Protective system which then prevailed the object was not to get revenue. An exceedingly small amount was received from the corn duty during Sir Robert Peel's lifetime. The object was to keep corn out of the country.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): No, no; to equalise the price.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Yes, up to a certain figure—to ensure that it should not go below a certain figure. Now, Sir Robert Peel, it is perfectly true, put on for the purposes of registration 1s. a quarter on wheat, and at that time the nation was much more anxious

to get rid of Protective duties than to obtain revenue. My own opinion is that Sir Robert Peel regarded it entirely as a registration duty and nothing else, and, having regard to ascertaining what foreign corn would come in and what would not, he placed a registration duty on corn. When the three years had elapsed, during which he had reduced and finally abolished the corn laws, the duty of 1s. was to come into force. The imports of wheat and flour that were brought into this country then amounted to 35,000,000 cwt. The imports of wheat and flour for 1900, which was the last year for which we have a Return from the Board of Trade, amounted to 189,636,000 cwt. In dealing with this matter, the question to be asked with regard to Sir Robert Peel is this — What would Sir Robert Peel have done if he had conceived the possibility that the time would arrive in this country when proposals would be made in this House to put a tax on corn which would produce between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000? That he would never have regarded with anything but the strongest dislike. That is a speculation with regard to Sir Robert Peel; but with regard to Mr. Gladstone's attitude, that is very clear. The right hon. Gentleman said that Mr. Gladstone remained in office for many years, and was always a great Free Trader, and did nothing to remove this tax. Let us go into the figures. Sir Robert Peel was in office in 1849. Mr. Gladstone was not in office until 1853, when he came in as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He then produced his celebrated Budget, with its great fiscal changes, which altered the whole system of taxation with regard to imports—the greatest Budget, in my opinion, that was ever brought into this House; and this duty was too trifling to take any notice of. What was £500,000 a year to Mr. Gladstone in the great changes he was making in the financial policy of this country? He was imposing fresh taxes on the country in order to free the springs of industry in other directions. But soon after he came into office, he, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was faced with a war. This tax had fallen then to £300,000, and that was the sum to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer alluded as the contribution to the Crimean war. In 1855 Mr. Gladstone went out of office, and he did not return until 1859, when he had again to undertake the completion of this great financial policy. In 1864 this question was raised in the House for the first time and for the distinct purpose of altering this duty, and Mr Gladstone very promptly and clearly dealt with this question, and left on permanent record what his view was. He said—

> "The acceptance of the proposal to re-model the duties would appear as if we were deliberately setting about the construction of a regular system of corn duties."

This was on a reduction of 3d. to 2d. on a certain class of wheat. This was Mr. Gladstone's reason for refusing to accept the proposal. He said—

> "I should be reluctant to see Parliament committed to any plan which might appear to assume that a duty of this kind on corn (not a very heavy impost, but still something more than a nominal one, which in principle it would be difficult to defend) should be regarded as a permanent imposition upon the greatest article of human subsistence among us."

Now, to say that Mr. Gladstone sanctioned such a proposal is obviously incorrect. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer dissented.] That was in 1864. In 1865 Mr. Gladstone left office, and he did not return until 1868 when, for the first time, he was Prime Minister, and Mr. Lowe was his Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the very first year of his Premiership Mr. Lowe brought in his Budget and removed this tax. It would be impertinent to lift the veil which shrouds the proceedings of the present Cabinet. We do not know who is responsible for some of the steps which are taken and upon which we look with wonder and amazement. We do not know whether it is the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Budget of the Cabinet. But those of us who had the honour of being colleagues with Mr. Gladstone know that no Chancellor of the Exchequer under him ever submitted any financial proposals to the House of Commons that had not his full approval, and we may take it as proved to demonstration that that was Mr. Gladstone's Budget and not the Budget of Mr. Lowe, and that in reality it was Mr. Gladstone who removed the shilling duty on corn, though Mr. Lowe has been held up to us

as rather a sort of financial pedant for so doing. Let me read what Mr. Lowe said when he asked the House to abolish the tax, and what were the grounds on which Parliament accepted it in 1869, and adopted it as our uniform policy from that year down to 1902. Mr. Lowe said it was clearly the intention of its founder that this tax should operate only as a register, but that it had really ceased to do so and had now come to be regarded as a source of revenue. The amount received from it at that time was £800,000 or £900,000.

"And what sort of a source of revenue is it? It is impossible to imagine any tax which combines more of the qualities which make a tax odious—that is, it is a duty on an article that is produced in England with no countervailing Excise duty upon it; it is, therefore, effectual as a Protective duty—that is to say, it not merely raises the price of the portion of the article that pays it, but also raises the price of the portion of the article that does not pay it. It therefore inflicts on the subject a burden much more considerable than the benefit it confers on the Revenue. If we want to get at the real evils of the tax, let us imagine ourselves applying to it the same rules that we apply to all other Protective taxes and put a countervailing Excise duty on the home-grown article. Just fancy the Excise man let loose upon the barns and the stores of the farmer and the corn-dealer, collecting a tax of 3d. per cwt. on their corn all over the country."

That, of course, is Mr. Lowe's opinion; he was a very great authority on these matters, and I commend it to the House for its consideration. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was no evidence that there was any reduction in price by the abolition of the tax—that bread was no cheaper, and that wheat was no cheaper; but I venture to submit for his consideration that that is no proof that the price would not be raised if the tax was re-imposed. To take off a tax is one thing; to put it on again is another, and a very different, process. As a matter of fact, the process is often gradual, before the price of an article falls, and some time necessarily elapses: but the moment a tax is imposed, say, in addition to the tax on tea, within twenty-four hours the price is raised in respect of the article upon which the tax is to be levied.

That brings me now to the question which has been raised and argued with so much ability by the hon. Member opposite—By whom is the duty paid? Now, somebody is going to pay it. It is not going to drop from the clouds, and it is not going to grow up from the earth. In one shape or another, the Chancellor of the Exchequer expects to get 2,600,000 additional sovereigns into the Bank of England. Who is going to pay, then? [An HON. MEMBER: The foreigner.] The foreigner? I remember once asking in the House, who pays the additional tax upon tea, and the hon. Member for Central Sheffield immediately answered me and said the exporters would pay it—it would be paid by the Chinese exporter.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): No, no. My right hon. friend's memory deceives him. I said that in the case of tea, the consumer paid, because we produce no tea whatever in this country.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I am delighted to hear that the hon. Member holds that opinion now; but I remember very well that I asked him whether, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put 6d. on tea in his Budget, the price of tea would not have been raised 6d. in every grocer's shop the following morning. Possibly that illustration made some impression upon him.

The price of wheat and the price of flour, after all, is the market price of the world. There is practically for all purposes but one corn market in the world. You will get neither more nor less for your wheat here, in New York, or San Francisco, than the price of wheat in the market of the world at the day; and the wholesale importer who buys wheat at the market price, subject to a duty, has, before he sells it either to the merchant or retailer—I quote the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year in dealing with the sugar duty—

"He has to pay for the Customs handling, for the expense of agency, for the interest on the duty, and any other charges which he may have to bear."

Those must all be added to the duty. There must be an addition to capital. Of course, corn and flour are imported in enormous quantities by merchants with very large establishments, and very large sums are paid. At all events, somebody will have to find money to pay for the interest on this sum of

£2,630,000 which is to be extracted from the article. In the case of wheat and flour this operation will be repeated more than once. The original importer will have to be recompensed for this burden; the large merchant to whom he sells will also have to be re-imbursed, and so on; and we know that when it is a case of re-imbursing, there is a tendency to put on a little additional profit to cover the loss and the risk they have to incur. Then, when you come to the baker, the same process will be repeated. To attempt to measure the burden on wheat or flour by the figures we are going to vote for tonight in this Resolution, is a fallacy. You must add the cost of manipulating, the cost of advancing money, and the cost of additional risk in respect of bad debts. I think my hon. friend the Member for South Somersetshire, and the hon. Member for South Shields, put the case very fairly—I think very much under the mark—when they mentioned the figure which they did. An hon. Member said with great truth that you could not make an addition to the price less than that of the current coin of the realm. The difference may be an eighth of a penny or a fourth of a penny, but the trade of this country will, in dealing with the retail article, recognise the halfpenny as the smallest coin. ["A farthing."] No, I say a halfpenny. It is a question of opinion, but I think if any addition is made to the price of the quartern loaf it will be an addition of a halfpenny, and I think a halfpenny will be requisite in this case to cover all the cost. It is easy to smile at halfpennies and farthings. The wages of this country are paid in shillings. The coins which are perhaps most familiar to Members of this House are unknown to the vast mass of the population, so far as their practical use is concerned. When you levy a tax upon bread, although it may be in farthings, still it is, as Mr. Gladstone put it, upon the greatest article of human subsistence, and if people are mainly eating bread, that tax will amount to a very serious sum to them, although it may seem a very small sum to us. I cordially endorse what has been already said—that this is a tax upon the poorest of the poor, and that they will have to pay it.

I have another objection to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It has been argued that, although it may be a violation in theory of the principle of Free Trade, it is not so in practice. What is Free Trade? It certainly is not fair trade. There is an opinion abroad that it is a violation of Free Trade to impose any duty on an imported article. Nothing of the sort. The question of Free Trade does not arise on imposing Customs duties. You may have a system of absolute Free Trade, so far as the principles of Free Trade are concerned, and every variety of Customs duty. No doubt it is embarrassing to business; it is adding to the cost, and trouble, and delay of business transactions; but it in no way affects the principle of Free Trade. The principle of Free Trade is that where a tax is levied on the import of any article from a foreign source, and the same article is made in this country, you should levy an excise duty of equal amount upon the home-made article. If you do not do so, that is a violation of Free Trade. I suppose it is a very small matter to steal a shilling, and a large matter to steal a hundred pounds. But the principle is the same. If you violate Free Trade to the extent of one or two shillings, it is a violation of the principle, notwithstanding the figure. The price is raised all round. It really comes to this—that you are calling upon the consumer to pay upon all corn and flour, whether it be foreign corn directly taxed, or home-grown corn indirectly protected, but the Exchequer will only receive the amount paid on the corn imported. The home-grown corn will not pay, and the foreign-grown corn will pay the duty, and that is to all purposes a Protective duty.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: The home-grown corn will pay rates and taxes.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: The proprietor of home-grown corn may have to pay a variety of other disbursements which the foreign producer does not pay, but that is not the question. The question is the price to the consumer. That is the essence of this Protective legislation. Protective legislation is the taxation of all consumers for the benefit of a class. You have the burdens of a tax levied on

the whole of the community, and only a very small portion of it finds its way into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Does anybody think that it will stop with this proposal? Does the hon. Member for Central Sheffield think this is the end of his "well done"?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Certainly, Sir.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford look upon this as the final step in the controversy between Protection and Free Trade? I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet looks upon this as a very small step taken in the heavenward direction. No, Sir, you cannot stop here. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has said that the policy of England is Protection if this Budget passes. I admit that this tax is a small matter, relatively speaking, although three millions is a large sum to raise; but it is Protection begun, and the appetite once gratified will very soon want more. A shilling duty will very soon become an additional number of shillings, and, as my friend the hon. Member for South Somersetshire pointed out, why not extend it to ham, cheese and other articles of food? It is very easy to collect, as the hon. Member said just now as a defence of his tax. Put a tax upon the general food of the British people, and what an enormous revenue you will receive! But I venture to doubt whether that is within the power of even a Parliamentary majority of 130. There are limits to the powers of the strongest majority, and I think that will not be seen in the present Parliament.

My third and last objection is this. The proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a violation of the principle that taxes ought not to be levied on the necessities of life. I am not quarrelling just now with the principle of indirect taxation. I think we shall have to have recourse to it again, and we have a good deal of it at the present time. But I say that the sound principle which we have maintained for many years is not to tax the absolute necessities of life. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said in his speech that when it is essential to increase the yield from indirect taxation, it is the time also when a tax on corn should be re-imposed. I say when that time has arisen—I do not agree with him that it has arisen—the essential, indispensable food of the people ought not to be taxed until every other sort of indirect taxation has been exhausted. That is a clear principle which I submit to the House. If you are going to have indirect taxation, the last thing taxed must be the food of the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer last night took up the point, and he said there was only one alternative—to increase the sugar duty. The hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Stirlingshire last night spoke very ably on the question of sugar. I am not going to argue that point tonight. I do not urge putting any additional tax upon sugar, but I wish to urge that there are two alternatives. I am not going to suggest a Budget, or a variety of things which are not taxed at present and ought to be taxed. But in reply to the challenge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to those who oppose this tax, that there is only one alternative, I say there is something else.

The first thing I would venture to mention to the Chancellor of the Exchequer is tobacco. The House will remember that in the Budget speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a very thin piece of ice to skate over, and he skated over it with very great dexterity. I must ask the House for a minute or two to recall to their recollection the history of our recent doings with the tobacco duty, and a very extraordinary chapter it is in our financial history. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself in 1898 stated the history of the Tobacco duty down to that time. He said—

> "The tobacco duty"—(that was in 1898)—"has remained the same as now, 3s. 2d. in the lb. on unmanufactured tobacco, for a period of fifty-six years, except during the short interval in which it was attempted to raise it by 4d. in the lb., an attempt which, I think, practically failed."

I do not agree with him upon that point, but that is, of course, a matter for argument. He then proposed that it should be reduced by 6d. a lb. That is the Chancellor of the Exchequer's short account of the history of the tobacco duty. But if we go back fifty years—that is, to the time of Sir Robert Peel, and including that of Mr. Gladstone, and through a long succession of Chancellors

of the Exchequer—it was 3s. 2d. a lb.; and it was so up to the close of Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, until Sir Stafford Northcote in 1877 for war preparations increased the tax by 4d. It remained at that figure for ten years, from 1877 to 1888, when Mr. Goschen took off the 4d., and the tax went back to the figure of 3s. 2d. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1898 reduced the tax by 6d., making it 2s. 8d. It is not ancient history yet, but I think the judgment of the country, of the trade, and of the public, was that that was a mistake; because the money which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I believe, intended to go into the pocket of the consumer of tobacco went entirely into the pockets of the manufacturers and retailers. When the war broke out in 1900 the right hon. Gentleman did not do what everyone expected he would do. He did not restore the 6d., but only put on 4d., making the duty 3s., and thus the House will see that at this moment tobacco is paying no war tax at all, but 2d. less than it was in the days of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone. Therefore I think I may say that a tobacco tax is at all events preferable to a bread tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that it was not a growing trade or a growing revenue. He gave us no arguments or figures or opinions of experts to bear out that statement. I must trouble the House to look at what the revenue from tobacco has been. In 1896 the revenue from tobacco was £10,748,000; in 1897 it was £11,000,000; in 1898 it was £11,433,000. In 1899, when the right hon. Gentleman took the duty off, it dropped to £10,900,000. In 1900 it was £10,885,000. In 1901, after the duty was increased by 4d., it rose to £12,838,000, and last year he told us in his Budget speech that it had dropped to £10,565,000; that was his justification for saying it would bear no more. That, however, is not correct. He himself told us last year that this enormous sum of £12,838,000 included £1,500,000 of forestalment duty that did not belong to that year; so that if you take the accurate figures of two years you will find that the amount of revenue produced by the tobacco tax was considerably over £11,338,000 in 1901 and £12,065,000 in 1902. It is, therefore, not a decreasing trade nor a decreasing revenue. The House will bear with one figure more. In the calculations with reference to revenue there is one thing which does not admit of forestalment, and that is manufacture, the amount retained for home consumption; that is regulated by the calendar year and not by the financial year, and the figures we have are significant. In 1898 the tobacco manufactured for home use was 66,479,000 lbs., in 1899 70,108,000 lbs., in 1900 it was 73,032,000 lbs., and in 1901 it was 76,851,000 lbs.; and the Commissioners of Customs report that, notwithstanding that there was an increase in the duty in 1901, there was an increase in consumption of 5 per cent. It is not, therefore, a decreasing trade or a decreasing revenue, nor is the trade in a state of distress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said there was an internecine warfare going on in the trade. Yes—a warfare that not only has disclosed the colossal fortunes that have been made, but indicates also that the competitors for English custom are prepared to give enormous bounties to obtain it. I do not know a more legitimate subject for taxation, and it is one which ought to be used long before we come to bread.

Then, Sir, I do not know what reason the right hon. Gentleman had for not putting an additional tax on beer. The right hon. Gentleman did what such a wise and astute Chancellor of the Exchequer as he is seldom does. He unfortunately went down to a dinner at Bristol, and no doubt he did admit there that it was undesirable to add to the taxation on beer, but beyond that I know of no earthly reason why he should not tax beer. He has told us that there was a decrease in the revenue from beer for the first time for many years, but surely an article which produced the enormous revenue of £13,500,000 last year is worthy of the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Before the war the duty on beer was 6s. 9d., and it was raised to 7s. 9d., at which it now stands. I think the figures speak for themselves. The revenue from beer which was £10,494,000 in 1895 reached £12,345,000 in 1900—in 1901 it was £13,940,000. The Chancellor stated that the revenue of 1902 was £200,000 less than that of 1890-1. The number of barrels charged with duty was, in 1895,

31,382,000; in 1900, 36,578,156, and in 1901, 35,993,246. The Commissioners of Inland Revenue attributed the decrease to the war, to the scare about arsenic, and to the abnormal price of coal.

Who is going to feel this bread tax? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that bread is so cheap that it is sometimes wasted, and that the tax would be a very trifling contribution towards the cost of the war. Where are the houses in which bread is wasted? Not in those of the people who will feel this tax, with whom bread is a necessity of life, and who have not anything else to eat. Do you suppose it is wasted in those homes? No, Sir; it may be wasted in the West End of London, but it is not wasted in the East End. I saw that one of the great restaurant companies in Piccadilly, which divides between 25 and 30 per cent. in dividends, announced that they would not increase the price of bread in consequence of this tax. It will not be wasted in Piccadilly, but the people you have to consider are the poorest of the poor.

I do not know whether hon. Members have read Mr. Booth's valuable report on the poor of London, or Mr. Rowntree's valuable contribution with reference to the poor of York. Without troubling the House with many figures, I may say that those two statements show that there are large numbers of the population of this country whose wages are not more than 18s. per week. It is not a question of thousands, but of millions; and there are still larger numbers whose wages run between 18s. and 25s. a week, and they also point out the awful poverty in the slums of London and of our large towns. The smallest addition to the price of bread in these wretched homes is a calamity. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the conclusion of his speech last night, said that in making our choice of indirect taxation we should choose that which would press least heavily on the people. I agree with him in that, Sir; but he cannot tell the House of Commons that this is a tax which will press less heavily on the people than any other tax. My hon. friend below me said he would not absolutely prohibit the possibility of a tax on bread. I can conceive a great crisis in the history of a nation, when its very existence is tottering in the balance, when it might be necessary to widely extend the limits of taxation; but I say that a bread tax should be left to the very last. I say nothing personal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because for him I have the greatest respect, but I do say that this is about the meanest tax I have ever heard of for a nation which has the almost boundless wealth of Great Britain. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington gave some extraordinary statistics upon this question, and whether they were correct or not I do not know. We know from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget that within the last two financial years the estates of people who have died in this country have been valued for death duty at £520,000,000 sterling. We know, too, that a penny on the income tax produces £2,600,000, and the nation in order to get £2,600,000 ought not to break down a great principle. I say, Sir, that to put on a tax which will press most heavily and injuriously on the humblest class of the people in order to get money is not worthy of this prosperous and wealthy nation, and is not statesmanlike. Do not tax necessaries; if you must add to taxation, tax luxuries. If the choice is between bread and tobacco, I say tax tobacco. If the choice is between bread and beer, I say tax beer. If the choice is between bread and the income tax, I say increase the income tax.

*(6.15.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The right hon. Gentleman at the close of his speech has been good enough to favour me—and I am very much obliged to him for it—with alternative suggestions to the tax now under discussion. He said—

"If the choice is between bread and the income tax, increase the income tax."

I have increased the income tax. I have increased it to 15d. in the pound. I can remember the day, not so very long ago, when nobody in this House more strongly denounced the great increase in the income tax than the right hon. Gentleman. How far are we to go on increasing the income tax? Are we to tax a single class of the people—not by any means all of

them wealthy—almost out of existence by that one tax; or are we to ask the people at large in time of war, in time of increasing expenditure in other ways, to bear a small share of the general burden of taxation?

The right hon. Gentleman suggests that I should have increased the tax on tobacco. I had to raise £2,500,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife told me it was a trifling sum. I do not think it is a trifling sum; but of this I am quite sure, that no increase in the tobacco duty could by any possibility have produced it. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, will give me credit for having studied how to raise money by increasing duties on such articles as alcohol and tobacco before applying myself to other and newer articles of taxation. I did it in the first year of the war. He said I had not raised the tobacco duty beyond the point at which it was before the reduction. But why? Because I was convinced that by raising it I should lose more than I should gain to the revenue.

The right hon. Gentleman has himself quoted the figures I gave to the Committee the other day. He has said that in the year 1900–1 the tobacco duty produced £12,839,000, and in the following year, the year just closed, it only produced £10,565,000. That was due to the forestalment of taxation in 1900-1 which properly belonged to the later year, to the extent of £1,500,000. That is true, but if he will be good enough to take £1,500,000 from the produce of the first year, he will find the produce of the second year was something like £800,000 less than it ought to have been after allowing for that deduction. Tobacco is not a growing revenue—from what cause I cannot say; but it would be absolutely impossible, in my humble judgment—and I can only give the best of my opinion to the House—that any possible increase of the tobacco duty could have raised anything like the sum of £2,500,000. The right hon. Gentleman says, Why not increase the beer duty? The beer duty was increased two years ago, and what has been the result? Not by any means the amount I had hoped for. As I pointed out to the Committee the other day, the consumption of beer is actually decreasing; and I should have deceived the Committee had I, in the face of the decreasing consumption of an article, suggested that by nominally increasing the tax I should raise anything like £2,500,000. I have proposed this duty because I believe it is one which can fairly be borne by the country without any such interference with trade as the right hon. Gentleman has suggested. Corn and flour and meal, with rare exceptions, are not articles used as raw materials in manufacture, and therefore a tax on them does not interfere with industry in the way in which a tax on such a raw material as cotton undoubtedly would.

But I turn from that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech to his general attack on the tax on its merits. He has three objections to my proposal. The first, and I believe in the minds of all hon. Members opposite, by far the most important, is the rooted belief that they seem to entertain that in the first place this tax is a Protective duty, and that, in the second place, to use his words, if this Budget passes, the policy of England will be a policy of Protection in the future. Well, Sir, I must say that for convinced Free Traders, for those who inherit the traditions of the Liberal Party with regard to economic questions, the amount of timidity with regard to the future of Free Trade which is shown by right hon. Gentlemen opposite is absolutely astounding. Do they really believe that the country is attached to that principle or not? [Sir H. FOWLER shook his head.] The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head. Does not he believe it? He said just now that, in spite of our great majority, neither we nor any other Government could really lead the country into a policy of Protection. Very well, if that be so, why all this alarm as to the future of Free Trade? I agree with the right hon. Gentleman. I do not believe that the country would accept Protection for a moment, and that being so, I cannot understand the extraordinary alarm which is manifested by hon. Members.

But now let me see. Is this a Protective duty or not? [An HON. MEMBER: "Yes."] The right hon. Gentleman contends, and it has been contended throughout, that in its essence it is a Protective duty. Nobody has

attempted to show that it was a Protective duty in practice while it existed. Mr. Lowe made the assertion, and that was all. Nobody has attempted to show in these debates that the registration duty, as it is called, on corn and flour was, in fact, Protective. The right hon. Gentleman says that where the Customs duty is levied on an article imported and also produced here, and no Excise duty is imposed, that is a violation of Free Trade. That is the principle which, he says, ought never to be violated. Has it always been adhered to? Is it adhered to now, apart from this duty altogether? In 1860 Mr. Gladstone proposed a new duty. It was called the unit of entry duty. It was a very small Customs duty upon every article that was imported—of a penny a package and of ¼ per cent. *ad valorem* on articles imported in bulk. That was a Customs duty to which there was no correlative Excise duty. It lasted for two years. Was that a violation of Free Trade? Every single thing that was imported into this country, produced, or not produced, also in this country, was liable to that duty. That duty was imposed by Mr. Gladstone himself as a new duty—by the apostle of Free Trade. Was it a violation of Free Trade or not? Why, Sir, of course it was not a practical violation of Free Trade, for the simple reason that it was so small that the effect of it on the price of the articles imported and also produced in this country was practically *nil.* But does not that show that the right hon. Gentleman has carried Free Trade doctrine to a ridiculous extreme? That duty was subsequently got rid of, not because it was found in its operation to be Protective, but because it was found to be harassing to the general operation of trade. That was why it was abolished by Mr. Gladstone himself. At the present moment we have a Customs duty which is a Customs duty only, and which is not imposed on corresponding articles made in this country which may, to some extent, compete with them. What about the wine duties? The wine duties are very heavy duties imposed on all foreign wines. There is no corresponding Excise duty on wine manufactured in this country. Is that a violation of Free Trade or not? I daresay hon. Gentlemen think it is not, because they firmly believe they can distinguish between foreign and British wines. I very much doubt if there is a single Member of this House, who is not an expert in the trade, who can with certainty make that distinction. But, at any rate, I will venture to say that there is no greater difference in kind between foreign and British wines than there is between, let us say, maize and rice, which are not produced in this country, and upon which, therefore, this very duty, according to the right hon. Gentleman himself, cannot be Protective, and the kinds of corn that are produced in this country.

Hon. Members may think that this argument is splitting hairs. Very well; but I am endeavouring to show the absurdity, if the right hon. Gentleman will forgive the term, of the extreme doctrine which he laid down. The question with regard to this duty on corn and flour is, whether it is of an amount that is sufficient to make it really, in practice, a Protective duty? I say it is not. What did the hon. Gentleman who opened the debate say? He said we were waving the flag of Protection. But almost in the next breath he said—

> "You are not going to do any good to the British farmer; on the contrary, you are going to injure him, because your duty may raise the price of the foodstuffs he imports."

Then there is no actual Protection about the duty at all. Now let me refer to the history of the past. The right hon. Gentleman could not refute what I said on this point with regard to Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert Peel instituted this duty and maintained it as avowedly a nominal duty; and the mere fact that it produced a small sum then because a comparatively small number of quarters of corn and of cwts. of flour were imported into this country, has nothing to do with the great question of principle which the right hon. Gentleman has brought before the House. Why is it worse in principle to ask Parliament to renew a duty which will make a really substantial contribution to the revenue because the amount of the articles imported on which it is imposed has enormously increased? On the contrary, if you are to argue this on the ground of principle, it was an infinitely worse Protective duty in those days than it is now, because a much less proportion of any increase in price which it caused went into the Exchequer.

The right hon. Gentleman went on to combat my assertions with regard to Mr. Gladstone. He quoted a statement by Mr. Gladstone in the year 1864, when he renewed and remodelled this duty. It was precisely to the effect which I had previously stated to the House. I had stated that Mr. Gladstone then said that he did not propose that the duty should be permanent, but that it was a duty producing considerable revenue which it would not be convenient then to part with. What does that mean? I think it means simply this, that Mr. Gladstone, while he wanted the revenue himself, was perfectly willing to overlook the theoretical violation of Free Trade, but that he had in his mind that possibly at some future day, when somebody else might want the revenue, the theoretical violation of Free Trade might seem more important than it did to him when he required it. But I turn from what Mr. Gladstone said to what he did. Mr. Gladstone, while Chancellor of the Exchequer, for something like eight or nine years, maintained this duty in all his Budgets; and when the hon. Gentleman who commenced this debate says the duty was objected to by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, I say the duty was not objected to by the great Free Trade politicians of that day. We see now a manifesto by the Cobden Club against this proposal. Can they quote a speech by Mr. Cobden against a registration duty on corn and flour? No, Sir, I venture to say they can quote nothing of the kind. Can they quote a denunciation by Mr. Bright of a registration duty on corn and flour as a tax on the food of the people? No, Sir, there is no such denunciation to be found. And that is what I say with regard to all this talk as to the Protective nature of this tax—that no one of any authority objected to it on that ground throughout all those twenty-three years, until Mr. Lowe abolished it on the ground of pure theory, and without any proof beyond his bald assertion that it imposed any practical charge on the food of the people.

But the right hon. Gentleman has said, and I am bound to say with reason, that though a duty may not be Protective while it lasts, and though its abolition may not benefit anyone by lowering prices, yet, if you re-impose it, it may raise prices. Very well, that is precisely what I had in my mind when introducing the Budget. I said that, in my belief, this duty had no practical effect on prices. I said also that it might be a contribution, though I thought a trifling contribution, towards the expenditure of the country from the working classes. I have been twitted since with having made two statements absolutely inconsistent with one another. Those statements are perfectly consistent. When this duty was imposed, as I anticipated, the dealers in corn or flour raised their price by the amount of the duty, and in some cases, though by no means in many cases, there has also been a rise in the price of bread. It is a very natural thing that both these things should happen when the duty is first imposed. But directly the ordinary conditions of the trade—that is to say, a new harvest, or some variation in the price of the article due to the fluctuations of demand and supply—have time to assert themselves, then this duty will cease to count for anything more than the proportion of the price of the article to which it is properly entitled. That I believe to be absolutely certain. How is it there has been this increase in the price of bread, about which so very much has been said? I have had the opportunity of looking through the *Bakers' Trade Journal* on this matter. I need not say that I found myself pretty well denounced for having interfered with their trade. That I take as a matter of course. But then I went on to examine the general opinions quoted in the journal of members of the trade with regard to the effect of this duty on the price of bread; and I found that their general opinion was that the duty was not sufficient to justify an immediate advance in the price of bread; that there was no real excuse for a halfpenny advance; that the whole rise that would be justified would be only one-eighth of a penny on the 4lb. loaf, as a sack of 2½ cwt., on which the duty would be 1s. 0½d., would make eighty-eight 4lb. loaves. I daresay the right hon. Gentleman opposite will ask, if those opinions were correct, why is it that in some cases the price of bread has been raised? I must say that the explanation seems to me to be very natural. It is said that the low-price bakers, who are actually stated to be selling bread at 3d. per quartern loaf in parts of South Essex, will probably have to raise their prices because of the

continuous rise in all other ingredients in bread-making — coal, salt, wages, taxes, and the improvements of premises required by law—and that they will take advantage of this opportunity in order to do it. But then the journal goes on to say that this would mean a serious loss to many of them, as most of them, especially the large firms, depended for the majority of their custom on being able to sell one halfpenny or a penny lower than the district prices, showing plainly what I said just now, that it is a temporary rise wherever it has occurred, and that it cannot permanently extend beyond the small proportion which this tax may bear to the total cost of flour, and of labour in making and distributing the bread.

The right hon. Gentleman has made a great deal of this tax as a heavy burden on the working classes. Let it be remembered—he cannot have forgotten it—that when it existed before, the price of wheat was something like half as much again as it is now. With the price of wheat now at about 31s. a quarter, it is surely so cheap that anything which may be added on account of the tax would still secure to the working classes an extremely cheap loaf as compared with former years. The right hon. Gentleman referred to persons earning wages between 18s. and 25s. a week. I have made this calculation. Take a man earning from 24s. to 25s. a week with his wife and three children. Say that they consumed 10 cwt. of flour and 1 cwt. of rice, sago, and food of that kind in a year. The permanent effect of this duty could only be a charge on them of 1d. per week. But does the right hon. Gentleman think that such a family will consume nothing but bread? I could take the right hon. Gentleman to cottages of agricultural labourers in my own neighbourhood. men who are earning perhaps 13s. a week themselves, and a few more shillings among their families, where you find not only bread, but butter and everything that a man could want, including meat every day, upon the table at dinner. Yes, but it is true; and why is this? The hon. and learned Member for Haddington alluded last night to the vast increase in the wealth of the country, with special reference to the income tax payers. I should like to refer tonight to the class below the income tax payers, and I would venture to say that there has been an increase in the comfort and means of that class greater in proportion than there has been in the class above it. Wages have increased on an average by something like 33 per cent., and if you consider also the effective value of these wages in the purchase of everything—I except rents, which no doubt have also increased—I believe it is true to say that the average effective value of the wages of the working classes is not far short of 50 per cent. more now than it was forty years ago. And with increased means, the working classes have to bear a lighter burden of necessary taxation. I wish the House would consider what is the relative burden of direct and indirect taxation at the present time compared with what it was forty years ago. That is a question which must be considered when you are dealing with the great question of whether we are by this new duty imposing on the working classes more than they can fairly bear. I have taken the amount received by the revenue from what is called indirect taxation—that is, taxes on consumable articles—in the year 1861–62, and I have taken on the other side what was received by the revenue from all other taxation—in other words, from direct taxation. I find in that year indirect taxation contributed 61.7 per cent. of the total, and direct taxation 38.3 per cent. of the total. Last year indirect taxation contributed 47.7 per cent. of the total, and direct taxation 52.3 per cent. The indirect taxation per head of the population in the year 1861–62 was 27s. 3d. Last year it was 29s. 11d. per head of the population, an increase of no more than 10 per cent. The population had in the same time increased 43 per cent. In the year 1861–62 direct taxation was 16s. 11d. per head of the population, and in 1901–1902 it was 32s. 11d. per head of the population, an increase of 94.2 per cent.

There is a very remarkable fact in regard to indirect taxation to which I draw the attention of the House. What was the indirect taxation derived from forty years ago? Does it press more heavily now than it did then? There has been, as I have stated, an increase of 2s. 8d. per

head of the population in its amount, but what has that increase been in? Indirect taxation in 1861–62 amounted altogether to £1 7s. 3d. per head, and of that, 13s. 6d. per head came from alcoholic drinks, and 13s. 9d. from the rest of the indirect taxation. Last year indirect taxation amounted to £1 9s. 11d. per head of the population, and 18s. 6d. per head came from alcoholic drinks and 11s. 5d. from the rest of indirect taxation. This has been due to two causes. The rate of taxation on alcohol in various forms has been increased, on spirits by 10 per cent., on beer by 24 per cent.; but if you allow for the increased yield due to that higher taxation, and for the same amount of drink per head of the population as was consumed in 1861–62, the revenue that should be produced now from beer and spirits would be £29,697,000. The actual yield from these two articles last year was £36,990,000. In other words, there has been an increase in the revenue from alcohol of no less than £7,293,000, due solely to increase in the drinking habits of the people. Well, I am bound to say if our working classes, who are the main consumers of beer and spirits, can afford to expend so large a sum in drink as this, is it not a little exaggeration to talk about the tax I now propose as one that will result in human hunger, and produce, as I have seen it argued, a future of poverty for a quarter of the community and open the door to the greatest social disorder? If our people only consumed as much alcohol now as they consumed forty years ago, the result would be that they would pay only £1 6s. 5d. per head now in indirect taxation, as against £1 7s. 3d. in 1861-2.

I hope I have said something to show to the House that there has been a vast increase in the means of the working classes of the country as well as in the community above them who pay the whole of the direct taxation. I hope I have shown to the House that in making this small proposal to increase the indirect taxation of this country I am not imposing on any class that enormous burden suggested by so many speakers and writers. Of this I am confident—while it existed, the duty was never considered by those who had to deal with the finance of the country as either in practice a Protective duty or as weighing heavily on the people until the year 1869; and when it was abolished not a soul was bettered, but there was a loss to the revenue. Now we have a necessity for additional revenue; it is proposed to obtain that revenue by a slight extension of the area of indirect taxation, involving less strain on the people, less injury to any manufacture or industry, and less hardship to any one than any other tax that will produce as much; and in spite of all that has been said, I believe it will receive the assent of the country.

*(6.54.) SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): The champagne argument by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer tried to confute the view of my right hon. friend, that we always accompanied import duty with a countervailing Excise duty, is so weak that the House must have seen it proved the case of my right hon. friend. The Chancellor of the Exchequer named two exceptions—he named a tax which was impracticable in its working, and which was repealed more than a generation ago, and he named the manufacture of British wines, which had seriously competed with the wine we taxed at our ports. He seems to live under a curious delusion in regard to the wine trade. In his Budget speech the other night he actually said that Members frequently drank British champagne while under the impression that it was imported wine. I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would know that the enormous value of the brands of foreign houses led to frequent inspection and legal proceedings preventing such occurrences. The childishness of such an argument needs not exposure, but the serious arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are well worthy of attention. He has denied that this duty will cause any serious disturbance of trade, and on that point I take issue with the right hon. Gentleman. The present duty, if it remains as small as it is, may be discussed from the Protection point of view without any great feeling, and may be allowed to remain without much disaster resulting. It is chiefly as an indication of a change of policy, as giving encouragement to Protection, that it is dangerous, but as regards the disturbance to trade, there can be no doubt in the mind of the House as to how great the disturbance to trade will be. I should like to ask the

Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the agricultural feeding stuffs. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has argued with great force his belief, which the future will prove or disprove, that this tax will produce no permanent rise in the price of grain; but does he apply that to farmers' feeding stuffs, on which the duty will be much greater? If he does not anticipate a rise in these, few will agree with him.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think it might facilitate the progress of debate if I say that in dealing with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, I forgot what I intended to say on this point. Of course, this is the revival of an old tax. Offal was regarded in the old tax as meal, and at that time the amount of imported offal was very small; now it is considerable. Certainly it is not our intention that offal shall be included in the higher taxed imports, and we propose to place it in the class charged at threepence.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: What the right hon. Gentleman has said affects a great part of my argument. There can be no doubt that as the duty stood—I have not examined the new proposal—there would have been a rise in the price of feeding stuffs of the cheaper kind, and that can be proved by the example of a similar tax imposed abroad. As to the bread argument, the right hon. Gentleman tells us of labourers in his own neighbourhood in Wiltshire earning 13s. a week, who enjoy meat every day; but if they do that, it is because of the strenuous fashion in which the people of this country have maintained Free Trade principles, which have caused food to pour into this country, enabling them to live on wages of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman says there will be no disturbance of trade, and that Mr. Gladstone maintained the duty; but the argument of my right hon. friend on this point has been complete, and I doubt if the House will think it has been answered. In 1864, when Mr. Gladstone said the duty could not be permanent, and said so in strong language, he was Lord Palmerston's Chancellor of the Exchequer; but when Mr. Lowe brought forward the Budget which was cheered by Mr. Gladstone at his side, Mr. Gladstone was for the first time his own master; and being his own master, can any one doubt that the violent language in which Mr. Lowe attacked the tax had the complete concurrence of Mr. Gladstone? The tax was unanimously repealed at that time—there was not a voice raised against the repeal by the whole House of Commons; but the tax now put on is very much heavier than the tax then repealed.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has widened his net, and included duties that were not in existence in the tax repealed in 1869. He has given some curious replies to Questions on this subject during Question time. He told the House that rice, which is for the first time included in a grain tax, was included because it was grain. It was not a grain for the purposes of taxation in 1869, but he tells us that he has included locust beans because they were included in the old tax. Locust beans are the fruit of a tree, and are in the nature of a date, and if you are to include locust beans as an extension of grain, you might just as well include cocoanuts. The cocoa beans are much more in the nature of beans than the locust bean; therefore, why not include cocoa beans apart from the cocoa tax? The locust bean is as much a bean as the Scotch woodcock is a woodcock, or the Welsh rabbit is a rabbit, or an angel on horseback is an angel. The locust bean is not a bean at all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has spread his net much more widely on this occasion. Not only is the duty imposed now much higher relatively to price than it was, but many articles are included in it that ought not to be included in it.

Now I would like to address myself to the point as to the disturbance of trade by means of this duty. This duty is a crude duty, and is a source of ridicule on the part of foreign financiers, statesmen, and professors, and observers of foreign systems who have undertaken the duty of studying tariffs for themselves. A tariff cannot be made on these easy terms without inflicting great hardships on certain trades, and crushing and destroying trades that have come into existence. Since the duty was repealed in 1869, not only have prices fallen, but an infinite number of small trades have sprung up, so that the disturbance to trade must be vastly greater than it was when the duty was in existence before. Now, the ordinary notion that the British farmer is the

person who sells the articles which are the subject of this duty is a pure fallacy; the British farmers are persons who buy them. The announcement now made by the right hon. Gentleman will no doubt reduce the burden that will fall on the British farmer; but none the less it will be a very serious burden, particularly in the Midlands, the Western part of England, Wales, and Ireland—a burden which is thrown directly on the farmers, and which will result in crushing out the infant industries which are coming to the farmers' assistance at the present time. The tax is not balanced with that dexterity with which all similar duties are balanced in other countries, and will fall most heavily on the cheapest articles. Holland and Belgium have Free Trade in grain, but Germany and France are Protectionists; but in both Germany and France most careful attention has been had to the interest of the farmer on this point. What has been the experience of Germany on this matter? It is well known that although we look on Germany as a grain country where the doctrine of heavy duties on wheat is deeply ingrained, it is a very modern fact indeed. When Prince Bismarck first introduced the grain duties in Germany—and in introducing them he supported them by the same arguments by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has supported this tax—the first duty on wheat was a very light duty, and he said it was to be a statistical and registration duty, and for revenue, and was not to be Protective. What was the result? That duty was better adjusted, yet it was found to disturb trade so heavily that that fact was made an argument by the Protectionists, who said that it was not worth collection as a revenue duty, and that if it was to continue it would be better to have it for good and as a Protective duty. Accordingly, in 1885 and 1887 it was increased to the present heavy Protective duty. The result is seen in the enormous Social Democratic vote throughout the German towns and the present tremendous Free Trade agitation in Germany. And there is no doubt that if those towns bore the same relation to the German Parliament as English towns to this House, that duty would long ago have been swept away.

Now, I say this duty has an interest to this House. It is of some interest as a Protective duty. If men like the Chancellor of the Exchequer remain at the head of affairs, this duty will probably not develop into a Protective duty; but there are those behind the right hon. Gentleman who will, if they can, develop the Protective policy and bring about the result which I have deprecated. There are differences among Free Traders, but every Free Trader must agree that complicated tariff treaties, if they are consistent with prosperity in some countries, are fatal to our position in the manufacturing world. At the next general election you will see the strongest and best organised attempt by the working classes to secure representation in that House by men of their own class. At that moment you have chosen to commence an experiment in the taxation of the food of the people! The gradual adoption of a Protective system will be fatal to our manufactures, and if adopted it will probably come at the same time that the United States chooses the policy of Free Trade, and in that event it will be the destruction of our Empire.

*(7.12.) SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): We have listened to many speeches of a most pessimistic character, and the one to which we have just listened is of that class. I do not know why we should feel so despondent in reviewing the question before the House. The characteristic attitude of the House during the debate has been an absolutely false one. This tax has been regarded as a strictly Protective duty instead of as a registration duty. That it is a Protective duty has been officially denied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and also by other speakers who have ventured to support the Government. I certainly cordially support the Government in this matter. A war Budget must necessarily be unpopular. There has never been a class who, when called on to pay increased taxation, has not murmured and grumbled at it. This war has been approved by all classes and sections of the community, and they desire to see their wishes fully realised. The hon. Member for South Somerset said that, instead of being a boon to the farming community, which he in part represents, this tax would be a most odious impost. I do not agree with him. It will not be any great immediate benefit to the

farmer, but I do not think the farmer's position will be as bad as the hon. Member described. No doubt the increased price of feeding stuffs will be a hardship, and I would ask my right hon. friend to consider whether these feeding stuffs could not be, at any rate partially, freed. If the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to allow this meal to rank the same as grain at 3d. per cwt, it would be a great boon to the farming community.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR) Leeds, Central): That is the intention.

*SIR MARK STEWART: I did not understand that. I am glad it is so, and I shall not have to argue that question any further. The whole point of the matter is that this is not a tax by way of Protection, or one which will at all press on the people. It is distinctly a registration duty, and does not violate any principle which has been again and again endorsed in this House. The duty was not really done away with until 1869, but if it had been of the character described by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, it would have been abolished long before that. I believe all this hue and cry to be a false agitation, and one which will not carry conviction to the minds of the people when the question is thoroughly understood in the country. It is true that in certain instances bakers have raised their prices, and wheat has gone up 1s. or 1s. 6d: but what does that prove? Merely that we are very short of foodstuffs, which is so far unfortunate for the Government, and that if you propose any tax whatever bearing on the food of the people there must be an agitation in the trade affected, and prices will go up.

It has not been suggested with any force that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have proposed any other tax. He had already dealt with coal and sugar, and he was justly unwilling to increase the tax on tea or tobacco, beer or spirits. Had he put, as many Members urged him to do, any further tax on sugar, working men would have had to pay 40 per cent. instead of 20 per cent. on that article. Surely that is of far more consequence to the working men than ⅛d. on a 4lb. loaf. I am satisfied that when trade resumes its ordinary position you will find there is very little increase in the price of the loaf. I am not the least afraid on this question, even supposing there should be an election tomorrow. Although the farmers will not benefit much by it, they will see, at all events, that it is only just that a part of the enormous taxation of the country should be raised in the manner proposed.

I wish some distinction could be made with regard to our colonies. If they could be freed in some measure from even this small impost, it would serve to strengthen the bonds of sympathy which have grown up of late years between the mother country and her colonies; and it would do a lot of good in more firmly uniting the component parts of this great Empire. By the adoption of some such principle, the Government would have a power of reciprocity by which they could counteract some of the prevailing imposts levied by foreign Powers.

I should like to say another word on the question of feeding-stuffs. I am not much afraid of this 8s. 4d. I think we should still be able to compete with foreign nations in the raising of meat. If due precaution is taken to tax only what is absolutely necessary to secure a fair amount of taxation, I think the country will be more satisfied with this, as a fair tax which presses most lightly on every class, than with another penny on the income tax, which already grinds down many a humble home, reducing the inmates to difficulties. I trust the Government will obtain a large majority on this question—not because it is a question of Protection, but because it is simply the registration of corn, which I and many others have looked forward to as being a very good and useful tax.

(7.22.) MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Budget, told us that his ideal was to find a tax which would yield a considerable sum of money without causing any great inconvenience to trade or the community generally. We remember the cheer with which this particular proposal was received by the hon. Member for Central Sheffield. That cheer was taken to mean that the proposal would involve the taxation of a number of articles; but the right hon. Gentleman rejected the

idea, and, in support of his rejection, called in the wisdom of two of his great predecessors, Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel. But what did the right hon. Gentleman do? He immediately selected an impost that taxes all sorts of articles, small and large together, and that is where he claims to be imitating Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced the tax, the impression left on our minds was that it was purely a grain tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech did not make it clear that these multifarious articles were to come within his net. It will be found that the Resolution embraces all starchy substances used as articles of food. That I believe to have been the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he has gone much beyond that. We ought to know the principle upon which this tax is imposed—or has the right hon. Gentleman abandoned all principle? It cannot be argued that Mr. Lowe scheduled these articles, because the right hon. Gentleman has included many articles which Mr. Lowe did not contemplate at all. But, even supposing it was Mr. Lowe's schedule, that was merely a remnant from the bad old times when taxes were put on without discrimination, and without knowing the effect they would have. It ought, therefore, to be stated upon what principle this tax is to be levied.

I wish briefly, but completely, to show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is acting this year precisely as he acted last year. He has not taken pains to investigate what the effect of these duties is going to be, or where their incidence will fall. He has not been well informed as to his case. Last year we had extraordinary anomalies cropping up, many of which were rectified in Committee. Now, at the very outset, before the Bill has been introduced, we have had the right hon. Gentleman relinquishing one of his positions. He admits he has made a mistake as regards offal, and has announced his intention of diminishing the duty from 5d. to 3d. The knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to this tax is imperfect, as it was in regard to the sugar duty of last year. In the first place, in the classification of grain, Class I., he has not included in his schedule articles which ought to be included. For example, there is millet, though I heard this morning that it was added last night. I do not know whether that is so, but if he is going to include all grains under Class I., certainly millet ought to be included. Then there is canary seed, which, as a matter of fact, represents a large amount in bulk, though, as I shall presently prove, the right hon. Gentleman has included taxes which can only be described as mean, using the word in the sense that they are insignificant. In Class II., which deals with starchy food substances, he has also omitted many articles which ought to be included. For example, he includes potato starch, but there is no duty on imported potatoes. Hon. Members may think the importation of potatoes an insignificant item, but I find that it amounts to 7,000,000 cwt. in the year. Then, pepper contains an enormous percentage of starch—as much as 66 per cent., while ginger contains from 65 to 75 per cent. Can anybody say that these are not foods? In Section 26 of the Act of 1899 there is given a legal definition of "food," and it is there laid down that any substance used in the preparation of foods comes within the definition. This tax is intended to include all starchy food substances, and yet those articles which I have named are omitted. On the other hand, it manifestly includes many articles which are not starchy food products, and which are not food at all. Take the article of locust beans, referred to by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. Locust beans are nearly all sugary material, and they are made into feeding stuffs for cattle. Again, this shows a lack of information on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. Look where this policy will lead us to one of those days, because we are not going to stop where we are. Next year probably there will be some sort of duty on butter, and perhaps the following year we shall get a tax on milk. Probably the Chancellor of the Exchequer will put in his list everything called milk, which will include milk of sulphur milk of lime, and probably he will put into the schedule an article called the milk of human kindness. The right hon. Gentleman has taxed articles which are not food at all. There is in the list dextrine, and this article is not a food. It was starch once, but so was whisky, and dextrine is simply a substitute for gum arabic.

The right hon. Gentleman does not tax gum arabic, and I give this as another instance of the lack of knowledge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I know that little fish are sweet to the National Exchequer, and anything he can tax is not beneath his notice. He has levied a duty upon an article called mannacroup, which is a miserable, wretched food which Russians in time of famine have to resort to. I do not think there is a bag of this article imported into this country. When there is a serious famine in Russia this mannacroup forms the dietary to which the people are reduced. The right hon. Gentleman considers this wretched food, as well as dextrine, as a fair article upon which to levy taxation. All such articles ought to be beneath the notice of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the Germans living in this country are in the habit of importing foreign-made bread. If he taxes dextrine, why not tax pumpernickel?—which, I think, would produce more revenue than dextrine.

The right hon. Gentleman has stated over and over again, and I think he repeated it in his speech to-night, that this tax will not be felt, and that the levying of this £2,500,000 will not be felt. All I can say is that the country will be most thankful to any Chancellor of the Exchequer who can give us some more of that sort of taxation, and who can keep on imposing upon us taxes that will not be felt But this is not a tax which will not be felt. Last year we contested the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement that the sugar tax would not be felt, and it was only owing to exceptional circumstances in the trade that it was not felt, and no one could argue that that state of things would be likely to continue. There have always been great fluctuations in the price of sugar, and there will be again; and the other taxes which have been levied will also be felt. My right hon. friend has suggested that this tax will rain down money from the skies like manna, and he continues to assert that there is no Protection in this tax. Perhaps I may be permitted to read two telegrams which have passed between this country and America dealing with this tax. The House well knows that the importation of flour from abroad, from our Colonies, and more particularly from America, has assumed gigantic proportions, and I will read a copy of a telegram sent by some of the most important representatives of the milling trade in the United States. [The hon. Member read two telegrams.] Therefore, the opinion of the American miller is that this duty discriminates in favour of the English miller to the extent of 6½d. per sack. These millers would be glad to contract for supplying flour at something less than 6½d, per sack profit. That is the extent to which the English miller is being protected. Last year the right hon. Gentleman refused to appoint a Committee to inquire into the sugar refining industry, and this year I accuse him of protecting the English miller to the detriment of the Colonial and American producers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had a great deal to say against Mr. Lowe's decision when he decided to withdraw this duty. I have taken the two ports of London and Liverpool in regard to rice. These two ports import 200,000 tons of rice per year, of which 110,000 tons are re-exported. The right hon. Gentleman does not seem to have any idea as to the quantity of these goods which are re-exported. The right hon. Gentleman simply looks at wheat and flour and all sorts of subsidiary articles which are now being taxed and re-exported, and unless we give a rebate upon some of these articles I am certain that much of the trade will pass away from this country altogether.

We have no doubt on this side of the House as to where this policy is leading, and we see in this proposal the beginning of a renewed system of Protection. Last year sugar was taxed, and this year starchy material is taxed. Next year possibly fatty materials will be taxed, and the year after nitrogenous materials. Then perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having run through the whole gamut of our food products, will turn his attention to clothes. We are determined to fight this Budget, because we consider that it is reactionary, and I am perfectly certain that, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that the working man is proud of his contribution to this war, he will not feel much pride when he finds the price of his bread is raised, and

when he finds that not only will his bread be taxed but sooner or later his meat and his clothes also.

*(7.46.) SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester): No one can approach the consideration of the important proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer without a sense of great responsibility, and sharing as I do in the representation of a large town composed for the greater part of working people dependent upon commerce for their daily bread I can assure the House that I do not presume to express an opinion upon those proposals without careful and anxious consideration. I therefore say at once that I am prepared to give them hearty and cordial support except the increased tax upon cheques which I find to be very irritating to my constituents. I shall not attempt to enter into details. I will confine the few brief observations I have to make to general principles.

My hon. colleague who shares with me the representation of Leicester accused the Chancellor of the Exchequer of want of originality in his Budget. My view is that this Budget, and also the Budget of last year, show very great originality indeed, both in the adaptation of the principle that the groundwork of taxation must be considerably widened, and as indicating that this country must look in the future for the vast revenue we now need to a considerable extension of our system of tariff for revenue purposes. I could have wished myself to see that groundwork extended in the direction of imported manufactures, for which there is ample scope, rather than of food stuffs; but this duty on corn and flour is so small that I do not think it will injure anyone whatever. I do not think that it will raise the price to the consumer in any way, and he will not know that it is there at all. It is quite possible that the price of wheat may rise from other causes; there is plenty of room for it; but it will not be because of the registration duty, which is to be charged to the foreign exporter. I conclude, therefore, that this tax, which is expected to produce £2,650,000, is not one which will have the effect of raising the price. But even if it should raise the price in a small degree, which I believe it will not, it will still be a fair tax under the circumstances. The principle that all should contribute to the upkeep of the nation, although in the direction of Socialism, yet is yet a sound principle, which I do not think will be objected to by any section of the community. I am aware that this tax will be used in the constituencies to raise a cry against the Government, but I venture to say that there will be no sincerity or reality in it, and that the people, who are now more educated and advanced every day, will be able to analyse for themselves and estimate at its true worth any agitation which may froth up for the moment in opposition to a duty which, while contributing materially both to the normal and abnormal expenses of the country, yet can do no possible harm. I can only express the hope that taxes upon food may not be extended in that direction, but rather in the direction, if revenue is wanted, of taxes upon imported manufactures, which offer a fertile field for Chancellors of the Exchequer in future.

I was very much interested, and no one could help being interested, in hearing the speech last week of the hon. Member for Oldham, in which he quoted figures showing the progress of our national expenditure, and, so far as he indicated the desirability of our getting the best value for our money and the preventing of waste, his suggestion was one which, in my opinion, is well worth attention, but I am unable to agree that economy, or even frugality, means necessarily the cutting down of expenses. Our Navy is an instance of that. In my view, the country will need more and more an ample revenue for domestic expenses which cannot be cut down in any way. We have a better educated people and a higher standard of requirement altogether. For instance, I think that all parties are agreed that poor old people should have a weekly pittance from the State, but everyone shuns the question of cost. In my opinion, expenditure in this case would be true economy. There is nothing so stimulating, nothing so preservative of mental and bodily vigour, as the assurance that abject poverty is not necessarily the accompaniment of declining years, and I believe that this assurance on the part of the State to its working people would not tend to produce a thriftless race, but rather a more vigorous, a more hopeful and ambitious people. I do not wish to argue

the question, but only to mention it to illustrate my argument that a very much larger revenue will be needed in future. The hon. Member for Oldham quoted figures, and I think there are other sets of figures which are equally worthy of the attention of the House. I believe that fifty years ago we imported manufactures to the extent of £20,000,000 annually; today we import something like £110,000,000 annually. It is this which offers a great resource in this country, which I hope Chancellors of the Exchequer will not hesitate to cultivate in future. We have an object lesson in our own Empire. The last time hon. Gentlemen opposite sat on this side of the House, India was in sore need of money, and what expedient did they resort to? Not to the taxation of ground values, or such fancy expedients as that, but they put on import duties all along the line, and the result has been most successful, because India has had magnificent surpluses in consequence. Although the duties are largely paid by the exporters of the United Kingdom, we have not heard much grumbling about them, and yet the time is approaching when the Secretary for India will be asked to remove those taxes, which are a hindrance to our trade. I think hon. Gentlemen opposite cannot express disapproval of our system of tariffs for revenue purposes. That would be a misnomer in the case of the boot and shoe trade, with regard to which the tax operates——

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to confine himself to the corn and flour duties.

*SIR JOHN ROLLESTON: I was only referring to the system of tariffs for revenue purposes. I hope that it will not be contended that when the imposition of a duty hurts our own exporters it is right in principle; and that when it might do them some good it is wrong. There can be no doubt that by their action in India the Liberal Party have driven a nail into the coffin of Free Trade, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer —unconsciously, perhaps, and unintentionally—has assisted in the preparations for the burial of that policy, which appears to be beginning to die slowly a natural death, and Sir Robert Giffen has done more than any living person to attract the approval of the country to his proposals. For what they have done in that direction that great Party opposite, and these eminent Gentlemen, in these fits of absence of mind, have, in my opinion, earned the thanks of the country, to which I, as a humble member of this House, beg to give expression by offering to the financial proposals now before it my hearty and cordial support.

*(7.58.) SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I do not propose in the few remarks I have to make to go into those questions which have been handed backward and forward across the Table as to whether there is a breach of Free Trade, or merely a registration duty. My objection to the tax, whatever it be, whether larger or smaller, is that it involves the principle of taxing the greatest necessity of human life. I think that is an argument which ought in itself to have prevented the Chancellor of the Exchequer from trying to impose it. It is perfectly true that it is only a small sum as compared with the enormous expenditure of the country. It is proposed to raise £2,650,000 by taxing this necessary of life. I do not think that the argument which has so often been used that it will never be felt is any argument at all. Adam Smith and all his successors have laid it down that the consumer must pay the duty which is added to the imported article. The tax falls upon the very poorest classes. At present twenty-one persons are in receipt of indoor or outdoor relief to every 1,000 of the population, or one in fifty; and above these there is a stratum who get very little but bread and lard, and articles of that character, on which to keep life going. My right hon. friend the Member for East Wolverhampton spoke of Mr. Rowntree's most wonderful and excellent work of investigation into the state of the city in which he lives. York is the centre of a large railway organisation, and in regard to that city Mr. Rowntree found that 30 per cent. of the whole population were living in families who do not earn more than 11s. 9d. per week, and of that sum, if I recollect the figures correctly, 2s. 4d. was paid in rent. The number of the average

family was 4.74. The people were living almost entirely on bread and those other cheap articles to which I have referred. He analysed this again, and said he found out of the 30 per cent. 26 per cent. were living in this great poverty, on account of the death of the breadwinner, and 22 per cent., from the largeness of the family and the insufficiency of the wages earned by the man to maintain his family on anything else than a meagre diet. Then 52 per cent. of the 30 per cent. had low wages, through irregular work. Now, if that happens in a place like York, which has all the advantages of the labour market, surely it must be the case with the lower stratum of the people throughout the country.

I maintain that the tax falls very heavily on the poor people, since it affects the main, and in some cases, the sole, article of their diet. That at once raises my great objection to this tax. One might have been selected which would fall on people better able to pay it. Its effect must be to raise the price of wheat one shilling more per quarter than the present price. We should then be able to do away with the duty on produce coming from our own Colonies, particularly from Canada, one of the most loyal of them. In my own district the moorland farmers buy Russian oats and other feeding stuffs; and as to maize, I find in many little shops in Ireland that for every sack of oatmeal four sacks of maize are sold, because the poor people cannot buy the more nourishing oatmeal. Yet the maize and the Russian oats are going to be taxed. The fact is the Government are going to break the rules of Free Trade, and are going to impose a tax which will be very much felt indeed by the very poorest portion of the community, and by the large farming interest. Poor people in Ireland, because they could not buy the more nourishing food of oatmeal, had been driven to maize, which would now be taxed. Farming has been a depressed industry for some time. Two of the largest Chambers of Agriculture in the North of England recently made returns to the Central Chamber showing that the only prosperous farmers are those who have moorland sheep farms and are able to work them with the assistance of their own households, and those who have turned their attention to the milk trade. I know a tenant of my own who has raised a milk trade on a farm of 400 acres by buying these food stuffs. I also knew a widow who started with a 200 acre farm; later she became tenant of two or three farms in the immediate neighbourhood, and before she died she had established her three sons on these farms; and it was all done by buying artificial feeding stuffs, because otherwise 80 or 90 cows could not be kept on the farm to supply neighbouring towns with milk. The quantity of maize imported is 51,000,000 cwts. It is now to be charged 3d. per cwt., to the great detriment of the agricultural interest and many of my constituents. I oppose this tax much on the grounds that were stated by my hon. friend the Member for South Somersetshire in the most excellent speech with which he opened the debate. For the sake of £2,600,000, the Government is going to put a tax on the very poorest portion of the community, and is putting it on to the detriment of the farming interest, which has felt the low price of corn and other things so materially in recent years. I cannot help stating, in my protest against this tax, that it has every disadvantage which a tax can have, and that it will have to be repealed some day, because of the injury that it will inflict on the people whom it should be the first duty of the Government to protect. (8.15.)

(8.45.) MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): It seems to me that the proposals of the Government are viewed by the country with profound dissatisfaction, and there is an evident feeling of alarm at the great and increasing national expenditure. I have often thought that the great mass of the people outside have been for a long time labouring under the erroneous impression that the increased taxation meant that the war was being paid for in that way. They are now coming to appreciate that it is nothing of the kind, but that the war is being paid for by loan, that if peace came tomorrow the taxation would remain almost where it is at present, and that consequently they can look forward to nothing except a serious burden of taxation which is beginning to press heavily on almost every class of the community. It is to be hoped that in the confusion of the war expenditure and the way in which that expenditure has been met, the people will not forget

one or two facts. The first is, that before the war commenced there were fat years, in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of having to meet a deficit, had a surplus, but that, instead of applying that surplus to alleviating the burden of taxation, the Government spent it in doles to the classes who least deserved them. Perhaps, when the farmer is paying a higher price for his feeding-stuffs, when men with small incomes are paying an increased income tax, and when the poorest class of all are paying more for their bread than they have done for many years past, then maybe they will remember that their money has gone not towards paying for a war with which possibly they agree, but to pay those doles which were handed out so freely in the early years of the last Parliament.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has been very anxious to make out that this tax on corn, grain, and flour has nothing of a Protective character about it. Strange to say, however, the most rapturous applause which greeted his proposal came from a body of gentlemen about whose opinions we, in this House, have no doubt. They, at any rate, to their cfedit be it said, have never concealed their opinions with regard to Protection. In season and out of season they have advocated a return to that system, and when the right hon. Gentleman stated that he was going to tax corn they greeted the statement with rapturous applause. And they were entitled so to do. I have no sympathy with their political views, but I admire the pluck and persistency with which they have carried on their cause, and they, at any rate, felt, when the right hon. Gentleman made his statement, that up to that point they had won the day. The Chancellor of the Exchequer objects to any reference to the thin end of the wedge as far as Protection is concerned. But the gentlemen to whom I have referred know perfectly well that, though this is a small thing now, it is an instalment in the direction they advocate, and I very much mistake their calibre if they do not take great care, by bringing all the pressure they can on the Government—and they have considerable influence—that this little wedge should be driven in a good many pegs before they have finished.

It has been said that the poor people will not suffer—that this is one of those wonderful taxes by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer will raise some millions of money without anybody knowing where the money comes from. There is one class, however, who are bound to be affected by this tax, viz., the agricultural class. It may be that the tax is not a heavy one, but it means that they will have to pay more than they did before. The right hon. Gentleman said today, that so far as grain offal was concerned he would be prepared at the proper time to move the reduction of the tax from 5d. to 3d. As one representing an agricultural constituency, I heard that pronouncement with much pleasure. I hope he will give the matter further consideration, and in a short time be able to state that, in view of the condition of agriculture, he is not justified in imposing any additional taxation on the farmers. If he is correctly reported, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen stated last night that the main opposition to this proposal would probably come from the agricultural classes. I think he is right. The British farmer has had the greatest possible difficulty to meet his liabilities of late years. I know it is fashionable in these days to say that farmers are much better off than they used to be. I do not assent to that view. They may not be quite so badly off as they were some years ago, but the condition of the ordinary farmer today is anything but satisfactory. To impose upon him an additional burden seems to me to be doing him a wrong. One cannot spend his life in an agricultural district without knowing the great difficulties which farmers have to meet their liabilities. One of the greatest difficulties with which they have to deal is foreign competition, as well as the railway rates. I would not be in order in referring to the question of railway rates, but it goes almost to the root of the agricultural difficulty in this country. But apart from that, there is the difficulty of foreign competition. What is the Chancellor of the Exchequer doing by proposing this tax of 3d. on grain? The principal countries with which the farmer has to contend,

so far as competition is concerned, are Holland, Denmark, and Belgium. In each of those countries there is no tax whatever on offal. Therefore, while, even at the present time, the farmer has this increasing foreign competition to deal with, the Government, which has always prided itself on helping the farmer, comes down to the House of Commons and says that in future they are going further to penalise the farmer instead of helping him.

But it is not only in the way I have pointed out that the Government injures the farmer. This proposal hits the farmer all round. I am not dealing with the corn farmer in Kent, Berkshire, Surrey, and the home counties. I admit at once that they are bound to get some advantage out of this tax. But it must be remembered that the great mass of farmers in this country are not corn-farmers. There are a certain number of large farmers who are corn-farmers, but the great mass of the small farmers have very little to do with corn. If you go down to the Western counties of South Wales, which are purely agricultural counties, you will find a great many farmers—I should not like to say the majority—grow no corn at all. What are you doing for these men? You are penalising them so far as their feeding stuffs are concerned; you are penalising them for every ounce of flour and grain that they have for use in their farms and for the food of their stock. There is nothing done for them; everything is done against them. As for the labourer, the proposal does not profess to do anything for him. The area of arable land in this country has been steadily going down. It has diminished from 9,500,000 acres in 1872 to 7,335,000 in 1900; and in the same period in which there has been a great diminution of the corn-growing area there has been a great increase in the grass area, the figures being 12,500,000 areas in 1872, and 16,750,000 in 1900. The Government will therefore see the serious injury they are inflicting on this class. It is all very well to say that it is a small amount, but it is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. I have had many opportunities of conversing with farmers, and I have been surprised at the sums of money which they consider to be substantial. I will give one illustration; it is of a somewhat personal character, but it will describe what I mean. A farmer came to me some years ago and said his farm was to be sold. He was in a very uneasy state about it. He had worked hard on the farm, and wanted, if he could get assistance, to buy it. I asked how much his rent was, and he said it was £65 a year, but it was too high. I asked him to what extent he thought it ought to be reduced, and said, "What would you say to a £10 reduction?" "Oh, no," he said, "if I could get a reduction of £4 or £5 I would be satisfied." The right hon. Gentleman will see that a very small sum of money to that class of man is a considerable sum.

I hope the Government will consider the total withdrawal of this tax so far as it refers to corn, or food, or food stuffs for cattle. I agree with the statement that a larger contribution should be made out of current revenue to meet the war expenditure. I do not think the Government have gone far enough in that direction. I feel the force of the argument that every class of the community should contribute to the war according to their ability to pay, but at the same time I think it is quite right that the consequences of heavy national expenditure should be brought home to the greatest possible number of people. I cannot agree with this tax on corn, because I believe it is a duty which will hit the very poorest of the poor, and it will hit severely that class who have a constant daily struggle to supply themselves with the absolute necessaries of life. I regard as a pure Protectionist fallacy the statement that this tax is so small that nobody will be affected by it, and that it will not injure anybody. In my judgment, the consumer in the long run is bound to pay for it, and so far as one can judge that run does not appear to me to be a very long run in this case. I read in one of the daily papers the statement of a baker as to the absolute impossibility of bakers continuing to supply bread at the same price, and he said—

> "Is it reasonable that the bakers are going to supply the Government with £2,500,000?"

It seems to me that that man was talking sound common sense. The consumer will have to pay in the long run, and it is because this tax will fall upon the poorest classes of the community, as well as on

the small tenant farmers whom I represent, that I propose at every stage of these proposals to offer my strongest opposition.

*(9.4.) MR. GARDNER (Berkshire, Wokingham): I desire to express my general approval of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As well as to Members opposite, this particular tax is unwelcome to me: so are most taxes, and most certainly new ones; but I have to remember that, as well as direct taxation, indirect, too, is necessary to the finances of the country, and the question is—Which is the least unwelcome? and I support the choice of the Chancellor in this matter. Much controversy appears to rage around the question as to upon whom the flour tax will fall. Hon. Members opposite contend that the tax will fall upon the consumer. I agree that it will to the extent of the tax. If I may say so without offence it appears to me contrary to common sense to endeavour to maintain otherwise; but are hon. Members and their friends dealing quite fairly with this question? A manifesto of the Cobden Club, signed by Lord Welby, declares that—

"The price of home-grown grain will be increased proportionately, and will add half as much again to the impost as it affects the people. Thus only two-thirds of the total tax will reach the Exchequer. The total charge on the people cannot be estimated at less than £4,000,000."

I do not appreciate the reasoning, and I think it fallacious, misleading. To consumers, bread will increase in price to the extent of the tax on flour, modified, in my opinion, by the influence which the untaxed English wheat may have. I admit this latter factor to be obscure, but even without it the tax amounts to half a farthing on a 4lb. loaf; or, in case the influence of untaxed English wheat has the effect I attribute to it, one-third of a farthing on the 4lb. loaf. And this fraction of a farthing can, over a length of time, be paid to its fraction thus: that no baker raises his price of bread on 1s. a sack, or on 2s., and very few on 3s., but always on 4s., and then to the extent of ½d. on the 4lb. loaf. This tax will simply accelerate a rise or delay a fall in price. I admit that the burden is on the consumer, but I do not believe it will be resented by any, however poor, in this time of financial necessity.

There is the case of the farmer. In some directions he will, no doubt, be hit. In feeding stuffs and foreign corn he will suffer, and in the matter of wheat offal. In the latter there is a case, I think, for consideration, for the 5d. a cwt. on flour covers in relation to wheat at 3d. a cwt. not only the flour but the offal derived from wheat necessary to produce the flour. I therefore submit that wheat offal at any rate should be admitted duty free. But to these taxpayers are there no compensations? The farmer is hit by the tax on some corn and feeding stuffs, but he will or should gain by the tax on flour, and in my opinion the one about balances the other. To the working classes there would be, could it be brought about, both in town and country, much benefit by the keeping going and setting going again of the small country mills. I much fear the time has gone by; this tax twenty years ago might have been of benefit in this direction. Could it now have the effect, young men would be, to some extent at any rate, kept from crowding into towns. The movement from country to town is caused not only by shortness of employment, but by a want of variety. In any purely agricultural district, should any young man quarrel with his employer or his work, movement into a town is his only alternative. With the country mills again in full work, some opportunity is given to vary his occupation, and stay in his own village, and though I admit the remedy in this direction to be only small, I believe the case impossible to be dealt with by any one large measure, but rather so by many small ones. I represent a constituency comprising much of agriculture and many of the working classes, and have no fear of being able to defend this tax on corn and flour in a time of difficulty in which I think the Government are entitled to our support.

*(9.16.) MR. REA (Gloucester): I rise to oppose the imposition of a duty on corn, not as an undiscriminating opponent of all proposals of taxation that are made, or could be made, by His Majesty's Government. We have got to pay for the war, and I have never refused to vote for any of the vast demands that have been made upon us for carrying it on. More than

this, I have been among those who criticise the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his timidity in the matter of taxation and his courage in the matter of borrowing. I have voted for the increases of the income tax, and if he had proposed double these increases, I should have supported him. I have voted for the new stamp duty, although I consider it a bad tax. But the sugar tax last year I opposed, and more strongly still I oppose the revival of the corn duty. I oppose them because I regard them both as excessive demands upon the people, not the people as a whole, not on the prosperous artisan and the small tradesman, but on the poorest classes.

It is said this war is a national war. It has the support of all classes—of the man in the street, the man in the workshop, the man in the mine—and they ought to pay their share, I agree. But what is their fair share? What is the fair share of the third of the population of these islands, which live all their days below the poverty line, people who have not a sufficient income to maintain them in fit physical condition for efficient labour. Men, women, and children who are always hungry, and who cannot be reached by taxation, except by reducing still further their scanty breakfast, which is also their dinner and their supper—bread, sugar, in one of its forms, and tea; taxed tea, taxed sugar, and taxed bread, that is all. To these people the indulgence in the extravagance of a halfpenny paper, or a rare penny stamp for a letter, reduces the children's food. For it is when a family rises to humble luxuries, when it can indulge in meat and fish, vegetables and fruit, butter and milk, it rises to free and untaxed food. What is the fair share for these unfortunate people? Surely no one in this House will maintain that these people should pay out of their life-blood as we in this House should pay out of our superfluities and luxuries. But by the last Budget, this—and much more than this—has been demanded of them, for these people not only consume nothing but these heavily taxed articles, but they consume the bulk of these articles. Per head, their consumption is far greater than that of the average Member of this House: little bread and no sugar is probably our portion. Out of all proportion to the average of the whole nation per head is the consumption of corn and sugar by the poor. In this bottom stratum of society the Chancellor of the Exchequer has found his "thick seam," his "bonanza." He is broadening the base of taxation, and this is the basis of the new finance. I must consider the taxes on corn and sugar together, for they are the same tax as far as the payers are concerned. I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth that in taxing sugar you were taxing the comfort of the poor only, and that now you are taxing their necessities. When you taxed sugar, you taxed the most important article of their food, and physiologically, I believe, the most valuable except corn only. It is more to them than meat or fish, vegetables or fruit, butter or eggs—for those to them are rare luxuries. The poor, the really poor—a third of our population—live on bread and sugar (with sugar I include treacle and jam) and tea. Probably jam is, at this moment, the cheapest food, calculating its effective food value, the poor can buy. The value of sugar as food has been demonstrated by careful experiments in the Italian and German armies.

*MR. SPEAKER: The discussion of the sugar tax is not in order at present.

*MR. REA: I was maintaining that the same classes are affected by the corn and the sugar taxes. And it is to an income wholly devoted to these items of expenditure the Chancellor of the Exchequer is taking the heaviest toll of all. It is surely idle to argue that a duty does not increase the retail price, as if a tax were not one of the factors in the cost that determine price as much as labour a freight. It is true the glut of beetroot sugar in the market last year prevented a rise in price, but it is just as true that the duty prevented a fall, and it is as certain the poor have paid a ½d. per pound more for their sugar as it is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has received it. And it will be the same with the corn duty. Already the wholesale market has responded with exact accuracy. The retail market will respond, not with exact accuracy, but with a retail profit added. The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted this in the case of beer, which he is not going to tax further, in his Budget speech. It is doubtless more difficult to add to the retail price of beer

than of bread; "fourpenny" ale remains "fourpenny," and "sixpenny" remains "sixpenny." But the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us what happens when a beer tax is increased. What is altered is not the nominal price, but what he euphemistically termed the "gravity" of the beer. The consumer pays—always, pays generally more than the tax and never less. I yield to no Member of this House in my admiration of the ability of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, but even he has yet to discover a tax that can be collected from nobody.

That the consumer will pay more than the Chancellor of the Exchequer will gain, in the case of the corn tax, which is also a Protective duty, every supporter of this tax knows well, and that is his principal reason for supporting it. Else why the exuberant delight of the hon. Member for Central Sheffield and his friends? They know it will not only pay the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it will pay others too. And the poor—they will not feel it—nobody will feel it! This stale defence of indirect taxation means only this, and in the mouths of those who use it consciously means only this—they will feel the pressure, but they will not know who oppresses. They will feel the blow, but they will not see the hand that deals it. It is interesting to compare the statements about this tax made by two different Chancellors of the Exchequer. It is true one is putting it on, and the other was taking it off. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer says competition will prevent it reaching the retail buyer—in effect, that it is not a tax on bread at all, but a tax on bakers. What said Mr. Lowe in 1869?—

"It has to bear the profit of the miller, the retailer, etc., before it reaches the poor in the form of a loaf. Why, it is a kind of poll tax, of which we hear so much in olden times, but it is graduated in a peculiar fashion, because it falls heaviest upon the poorest of your people. It has been computed by those who have inquired into the subject that if a man and his family ate nothing but bread—which is the case of the very poor—this duty would be equal to something like an income tax of 1½ per cent. upon the whole means of the family. But if a man rises in his scale of diet, and eats meal, eggs, butter, and the like, he then lives on articles that are duty free, and, therefore, this tax presses with its greatest severity on the poor—that severity increasing in the ratio of their poverty."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer called it a little tax—but what did Mr. Lowe say upon this point?—

"The only thing that can be said for it is that it is a little tax. If, however, the argument that the tax, being small, can, therefore, do no harm, is to prevail, then I can say we have found the philosopher's stone of finance, because whatever may be the difficulty of putting on a good tax, nothing will be so easy as putting on a little tax, or a number of little taxes."

But I dispute that it is a little tax. I maintain it is a big tax, and, when added to the sugar duty, is a burden upon the poorest, not only oppressive, but intolerable. Mr. Lowe, himself, showed it was a very big tax to the really poor. For what is 1½ per cent. of your income? It is an income tax of more than 3½d. in the pound, and the sugar tax may be said to be a tax of at least 4d. in the pound — that is, together, 7½d. in the poor man's single pound per week. The measure meted out is 3d. more income tax to ourselves (for our share of these articles of prime consumption is in reality infinitesimal, and must be put down at a small decimal of a penny)—3d., I say, to ourselves, and more than double this tax on the very humblest class.

And to reconcile Members of this House to the last penny on the income tax, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has practically pledged himself that the first remission of taxation shall be given to the income tax payers. Hon. Members on the opposite side of the House cheered that announcement with unanimity, just as they cheered the imposition of these taxes on the special food of the very poor. I do not doubt they would cheer the doubling of these taxes. Their financial prophet and teacher says, income tax must go down to 6d., and the "financial basis of taxation enlarged." The last part of this policy has been begun, the first is promised. I have been trying to explain to the House what, in my opinion, this course means. In opposing this tax, and that on sugar, I have been pleading the cause of the very humblest of the people — people with slight influence politically; for even in these days of extended franchise, the class I speak for is still politically the most inarticulate. They are not the intelligent working classes, but the unskilled and helpless, who yet number one in three, and who live on bread and sugar and grain and tea.

*(9.36.) MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford): I do not intend to detain the House at any length, and I hope I shall not follow the example of the hon. Member who has just sat down by reiterating arguments and reading passages which have already been laid before the House by former speakers, and more particularly passages from Mr. Lowe, which were read by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton.

*MR. REA: They were not the same.

*MR. CRIPPS: Now, Sir, I submit that the question here, as it seems to me, is whether the allegations made against the proposals of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer can be substantiated or not. Two allegations have been made here—first, that the duty is Protective in character, which is an economic question, and must be approached on economic grounds; and second—and this is a much more practical question—whether the incidence of this tax will fall on the working classes, and especially, or particularly, on what has been called the poorest of the poor. I approach this question as a Free Trader. Without discussing the more general principles on which Free Trade has been justified from time to time, I think as regards the condition of our English industries Free Trade is absolutely essential, and while we have the world-wide industries and interests which we possess, and while we seek to become the workshop of the world, it is impossible to contemplate anything like Protective duties as against the principles of Free Trade, which have prevailed in this country, to the great advantage of this country, for a very great number of years.

Now just let us see whether this is a Protective duty or not. In the first place, it is not a duty of which the object is Protection, or a Protective duty within the ordinary sense of the term as it was used by the older economic writers, even if we go back as far as Adam Smith. I do not think that even the most determined opponent of this duty has suggested that this is a Protective duty in that sense, and that is the true sense in which we ought to apply the word "Protective." But it is said it is Protective in another sense. It has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton. He says this:—

> "You have a Protective duty wherever you place a duty on some product which is manufactured here, or which is produced in this country, without you have a corresponding excise charge as regards that product or manufacture."

That is the test of the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton. First of all, I demur to the doctrine that Free Trade brings about any such necessary consequence as regards our methods of taxation. Of course, Free Trade in its wider sense is based on two principles with which I am thoroughly in accord. First, it is the general doctrine that Governments should interfere as little as possible; with trade, and from that point of view the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean attacks the proposed duty, because he thinks it will unduly interfere with industrial freedom. I think it is extremely important to extend Free Trade as far as possible in industrial directions, and that you should restrict industries as little as possible, but you cannot carry out the principle on strictly logical lines. The Free Trader in that sense would object to all factory legislation and all sanitary legislation, and it is quite impossible, however we may wish to interfere as little as possible, to keep from doing so altogether. There are certain necessary restrictions, and the question is whether those restrictions can be justified or not. What is the other principle as regards Free Trade? The general doctrine expressed in its widest form, although probably not accepted in that form at present, is that apart from any Government interference you have got by means of Free Trade production under the cheapest conditions. Without interference, you have a natural tendency to produce things when they can be produced under the cheapest conditions. If I thought this duty would interfere in any serious degree with cheap production, I think it would come under the category of Protective duties.

Now, can it be said that it attacks either of those principles—that this duty is in any sense a Protective duty? Does it interfere unfairly as regards trade restrictions? I listened with great attention to the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. Part of his argument was that he objected to

this tax because it would cause unnecessary interference and dislocation of trade. How can he say that a tax of this kind is an unnecessary interference with trade, or that it is likely to lead to industrial dislocation in the country? If you take a test of this kind, I think a tax such as is proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer — I mean this particular duty called the corn duty—is as calculated to interfere to a minimum extent with trade. So far from this being a Protective duty, in this sense it is a duty which interferes as little as possible with industrial conditions and regulations.

Let us consider for a moment the other point of view. Can any man say there is the least possibility that this tax will lead to the production of corn under the worst instead of the best economic conditions? Is it conceivable that the production will be interfered with at all? When we get away from those two tests, which I say are the right tests, then we come back to consider the basis on which we ought to consider a tax of this kind, namely, if you have to produce a revenue, which you undoubtedly have for the purpose of a War Budget, is this the best expedient? Is there any other way in which it would be possible to obtain it with less friction or less industrial dislocation? I think it is not possible that you could obtain a fund with less industrial dislocation. Now, we have had two means suggested for raising this tax, beer and tobacco; but my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has answered these suggestions, and therefore I will not refer to them. There is a very important point raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, because if his point is right it really would be a blow to ever enlarging the basis of that which we may call indirect taxation. The right hon. Gentleman's view was this: you are always pursuing a Protective and therefore a false policy whenever you place a tax on a commodity largely produced in this country without at the same time placing an excise duty on the production of this commodity. Now, it is impracticable to suggest that where you have any large manufacturing interests of any kind, you are going to put on them an excise duty. Therefore, if this view is to be accepted, you can never put an indirect tax on any commodity produced by a manufacturing process that happens to be imported, and at the same time is largely produced in this country; in other words, you are only to put such a tax on manufactures only slightly produced in this country.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Unless you put an excise duty on the same article—for instance, beer, or spirits.

*MR. CRIPPS: Beer does not come into this matter at all. What I am putting is this—as regards any manufactured product of this country which has to compete with foreign competition, and has to bear all the ordinary incidence of competition—whether you take iron, or cotton, or any great industry of that kind—it is practically impossible, in regard to that industry, to put on anything like excise duty. If the right hon. Gentleman is right—and I think in this matter, although I am a sound Free Trader, he carries the doctrine of Free Trade too far; because every economist has to consider questions of expediency—if you take the right hon. Gentleman's view, it means this: In regard to indirect taxation you must impose excise duty if you put a tax on a commodity that is largely manufactured in this country. I do not agree with that. Although I am a Free Trader, I think in the process of fair taxation you cannot put on one side that large class of commodities which the right hon. Gentleman's argument would exclude; therefore I think, on economic grounds, that there is no interference here with the Free Trade principle, nor is it a Protective duty. It is not a duty for the purpose of Protection, which is Adam Smith's test, which is the only true test, and I do not think a Free Trader is bound to accept the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, that you cannot place a duty upon a commodity largely manufactured in this country unless you place a corresponding excise duty upon it.

Now, only one or two words on the other principle, which is, perhaps, equally important, but more governed by practical considerations. On whom does this tax fall? Is it true that this tax, to a large degree, falls harshly and unjustly on the working classes, or,

at any rate, on the poorer portion of the working classes? That is the one-third which the hon. Gentleman takes out of Mr. Rowntree's book. I may say in passing I do not agree with Mr. Rowntree's figures, but that is a matter that we cannot go into now. We must have the economic side as well as practical application. Now, we have had two views of value put forward this evening, one of which I hardly agree with, and one which I should be very much inclined to contest. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow took as the test of value what is often called scarcity value—that is to say, the value arrived at by supply and demand. This is a sufficient test in economics as regards value, although cost of production is an element whether you have scarcity or not. I do not believe economists are right who take that test. In a case of this kind there is not the remotest chance of there being scarcity value as regards corn. Of course if you had the tax so high that you limited the production, you would at once have the risk of creating a high scarcity value, but nobody supposes that this shilling per quarter on corn is likely to produce any reduction in the supply, or produce anything like a special scarcity value, and a shilling per quarter will be the outside extra price which is ever likely to be permanently added. Now, who pays that shilling? We have had a most extraordinary variety of arguments upon this point. We have been told that the producer pays it, that the consumer pays it, and—most remarkable of all—the hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham said one of the reasons against the tax was the large amount of corn produced and imported from Canada, and that it was a very hard thing that we should place a duty of this kind on our loyal colonists. We have therefore boxed the compass in endeavouring to find on whom the ultimate payment of this tax falls. I do not think myself that any appreciable amount of this tax will fall upon the consumer. That is a matter of opinion, and nothing is more difficult in economic questions than to discover where the incidence of a tax is. Sometimes in the haggling of the market the consumer gets the better bargain, and sometimes the producer gets the better bargain, and therefore you cannot lay down any general principle on a point of this kind. If one considers the conditions under which corn is imported into this country, it is, at any rate, highly probable that the main portion of this charge will not fall upon the consumer at all. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields seemed to think that it would fall upon the consumer in a singularly hard degree, because the amount of the duty is so small that it cannot be expressed by the smallest coin of the realm—that, I think, is a reason why it should do nothing of the sort. I believe, on the other hand, having regard to the very small duty, and having regard to the conditions under which corn is imported into this country, that the probability is that none of this tax will fall upon the consumer at all. It is on these grounds that I think the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be supported merely as a proposal in the interests of revenue. If I thought it was against the interests of the production, I should certainly oppose it. I represent a very large industrial division in Lancashire, which has long supported Free Trade, and which believes that any departure from the main principles of Free Trade would be disadvantageous to this country, and I should raise my voice against such departure.

(10.0) MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): So far this has been a British debate. You have had no Irish Member voicing Irish opinion speaking upon this matter. Now, as an Irish representative, I entirely object to any increase in taxation, because our population is diminishing, our wealth is decreasing—we are already overtaxed; and this is a matter upon which the Financial Relations Committee have delivered a verdict several years since that Ireland was overtaxed to the amount of two and three quarter millions sterling per annum, and this overtaxation has been largely increased. Last year Ireland paid £11,888,000 imperial taxation from a reducing population of less than four and a half millions. Sir, it is admitted that no fiscal law is universally applicable; and with regard to the doctrine of Free Trade, of which we have heard so much in this debate, there is really no such thing as Free Trade in existence. Hon. Members may differ from me: they have a right to their opinions, I have a right to mine: and I will prove it to the Committee. You

have here a system falsely designated as Free Trade, but which in reality is a system of Free Imports. What is the meaning of Free Trade? It is free interchange of all commodities. Does that exist in any country in the world? One hon. Member, with a wealth of language about scarcity value has confused our thoughts on the ground of Free Trade as it strikes him from the Conservative point of view. You have Free Trade with a tax on sugar, tobacco, beer, wine, whiskey, and with an export tax on coal, and with a tax upon everything else likely to realise sufficient to make it worth while to be taken into the Exchequer. I wonder that Englishmen, who generally look on matters of finance in a level-headed kind of way, regard this as Free Trade. Every person who has studied and understands the subject knows that your policy is Free Imports, not Free Trade. When it suited England to penalize Free Trade in Ireland it was done. Now you force a policy of Free Imports because it is convenient to Great Britain. Sir, Irish opinion with regard to Free Trade is this. It has been a main factor of the agriaultural ruin of Ireland; and since the introduction of Free Imports, nominally in 1846, but not really until many years after that date, the population of Ireland has diminished year by year, because Ireland being an agricultural country the people work under different conditions, and it is only natural the population should decay, and wealth and work decrease. Our economic conditions are such that we are entitled to special treatment in this matter. What are we Irishman here for? We are here to voice the opinion of our constituents and to guard the interests of our country. There is little about Ireland in this debate or this Budget, and I feel bound to say, in considering this matter, Irish opinion ought to be at least consulted, because if you expect us to remain loyal to the British nation we ought to get an equivalent for it to which we are constitutionally entitled. Loyalty is a contract. If hon. Members think I am laying down any unconstitutional doctrine, I can refer them to authorities which will convert them. Loyalty is a contract. Rulers are bound to govern those who pay taxation, so that they may enjoy freedom and prosperity. We have neither freedom nor prosperity, and yet you expect us to be loyal; you expect us to pay in a greater degree through over taxation for being exterminated than Great Britain does where you are increasing in numbers and in wealth. Hon. Members have spoken in this debate upon the wonderful prosperity of the British nation. The hon. Member for Haddingtonshire gave a long and learned disquisition last night about the British annual income amounting to something like £175,000,000 per annum, and he calculated the percentage of taxation, but he did not inform the House that the annual income of Ireland is under £40,000,000, and the percentage of taxation is much higher than that paid by Great Britain. He also expatiated about War expenditure. It would not be in order to enter into a discussion about the war—further than to say it has materially increased Imperial taxation in our impoverished country, and I assert that the British people ought to bear the expenditure of this war themselves, because it was popular with them, they voted for it, and they ought to pay for it; and we Irishmen, who have always protested against it, ought not to be made to pay for a war of which we have never approved. The main proposition of this Budget is a tax upon corn. I am not in favour of a tax upon it because corn is a raw material, and should be admitted without registration duty owing to the extraordinary condition of the agricultural position of the three kingdoms, but I would tax flour to a greater degree than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes. But corn, being a raw material, if it were allowed to be imported free, would help industry in the direction of making flour, which would keep down the price of bread, also providing offal for feeding stuff such as bran, pollard, and sharps. This important Supply has apparently been lost sight of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I heard some hon. Member on this side of the House give the enormous figures of the output of foreign mills, especially the gigantic mills of Minneapolis. Are you prepared to support by your custom, and perhaps bring into this country, the trusts and monopolies of America, which are the bane and curse of the country? Are we to understand that you are not prepared to protect our own miller? If all your mills were going, there would be employment

for thousands of people. One cannot travel alongside a river, large or small, in almost any part of the three kingdoms, without coming across scores of ruined mills which have been abandoned. If these mills were set going, they would give employment to thousands of people, and to a large extent prevent emigration from rural districts, at the same time providing flour for bread and offal for live stock. Hon. Members who have grand ideas of Free Trade take a peculiar view of this question. I know what the Free Traders are. They imagine that nobody knows anything but themselves. The Manchester School of Free Trade apparently act as if God gave them the monopoly of knowledge. But I have the courage of my convictions, and I believe the time is coming when the people will think that the principle of free imports called Free Trade will have to be largely revised if there is to be anything like prosperity in this country. Let hon. Members look up the returns for the last year, and what do they find? America has beaten you. Your assumed commercial superiority is being threatened in every quarter by the Protective countries, and, above all, you find that from Ireland and Great Britain men are emigrating from their own country to America, that is to say, from the country of Free Trade to the country of Protection. The balance of exports and imports is entirely against you, and they have been increasingly so for years.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think the hon. Member should come a little nearer the concrete case of corn.

*MR. FIELD: I will return to corn. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in a mood to receive a hint from an Irish Member, I would suggest that there should be no duty on wheat or Indian corn, or on bran, pollard, or sharps, and that the duty should be put principally on flour. I wish to state a fact which is probably unknown to many Members of the House. An enormous quantity of imported corn is ground in Liverpool. The offal of that corn is actually exported to Denmark, Holland, and other places, where it is used for the feeding of live stock, to produce milk and butter to be imported into Great Britain, and sometimes to feed cattle for importation into this country. This is a strange method of international business. Now why is it so exported? Because the railway rates are so high that it is cheaper to take the offal right over the sea than to send it a few miles inland. But if imported in a manufactured condition it would receive the preferential treatment accorded to foreign produce. However, the foreigners are intelligent enough to keep their employment and offal at home. May I seriously suggest to the House and the Chancellor that there ought to be some intelligent settled principle guiding the imposition and incidence of National Taxation. The right hon. Gentleman calls himself a Free Trader. It is almost political blasphemy to call him anything else. He has taxed sugar and coal, and now he taxes corn. He really does not know where he is. But if we are going to tax corn, why do we not tax frozen meat? Live stock imported gives employment and provides hides and offal. Frozen or refrigerated meat does neither, and a moderate impost would not largely influence its price or consumption. Besides, the export of frozen and refrigerated meat is frequently subsidised by the Governments whence it comes. We do not tax bacon or butter, which ought to be produced to a large extent at home. What you call Free Trade is really Protection to the foreigner. You not only give the foreigner preferential rates, but you find a market for his goods. If you introduce a Budget with a tax on corn, these other matters ought to be taken into consideration. A right hon. Gentleman on this side made an intellectual speech about Socialism on the Continent, and he said it all came from dear bread. I have studied Continental politics, and know that political differences are at the bottom of all these questions. In most of those countries the people who are protected are, in ratio, better off than the people of England. I believe an hon. Member here, who claimed to represent the poorest, or, as he put it, the largest constituency in the country, said that one-third of that constituency were on the verge of starvation. I have been all over Europe, but I never saw anything like one-third of the population in those countries on the verge of starvation.

I have taken an original, courageous, and commonsense view of this matter,

and I hope other hon. Members will take up my line of argument. I maintain that no country in the world can be permanently prosperous with ruined agriculture and land going to waste. That is a proposition which may be safely accepted on both sides of the House. Hon. Members may say that if there are prosperous manufacturing industries, agriculture does not need to be looked after. That doctrine may appear to suit certain portions of Great Britain, but it is not generally applicable to Ireland. The history of all ages proves that in due course, within a cycle of a few years, a country undoubtedly becomes weakened unless care is taken of its agriculture. That will be true of this country. One of the great reasons why the labour market becomes over-stocked is that there is no employment for the agricultural labourer.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is getting away from the subject before the House.

*MR. FIELD: Sir, I have been perfectly sincere in making these suggestions, though I am quite aware that some of my hon. friends, and especially my own colleague, may think that if such a policy were adopted, rents would be raised in Ireland and in Great Britain. I do not think that is likely to occur in the immediate future. The people of this country had to be forced into what is called Free Trade, the conditions have changed—productions, transit, electrical power, consumption and supply are all improved. But it will take some time to educate popular opinion. A modified enlightened policy of Protection can at the same time maintain cheap food and give employment by keeping our own market. I am the first Member in this House who has had the courage to put forward these ideas, but time will show the wisdom of advancing them in order that they may be discussed. In conclusion I would say that if I were allowed to follow my own opinion I would vote against the corn tax, or any tax on live stock or raw materials, but I would put a tax on flour and on all manufactured articles which come into this country. For the time is coming when the existing system of Free Imports will have to be modified in order to protect the industries, the agriculture, the workers, and the finances of the three Kingdoms.

(10.22.) *MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The hon. Member who has just sat down has told us that in theory he is a Free Trader, but whether he is a Free Trader or a Protectionist in practice, I find it rather hard to discover; but, judging from the speech he has just delivered, he appears to me to have very decided views in favour of Protection. However that may be, I am well aware that I am among those who have always been regarded as suspect in the matter of Free Trade. I do not quite know why. I defend and support this proposal tonight, as I have frequently defended and supported it before, both in and out of Parliament, on the ground of revenue alone, and I shall be glad to be permitted to reply to some of the critics of the proposal. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment referred to me as one of those who had always been ready, with great frankness, for which he complimented me, to advocate a 5s. duty on corn. The compliment was entirely undeserved. To the best of my recollection, and I am pretty certain I am right, I have never, before any audience, either in or out of Parliament, advocated a 5s. duty on corn. The statement has been so often repeated that I have no doubt a great many people believe the legend to be true, but, as far as I am concerned, it is entirely without foundation. The hon. Member cited in support of this view a speech which he said I made at a northern meeting two or three years ago, under the auspices of the present Postmaster General. I recollect the occasion, and it is very curious that the hon. Member should have referred to it. I will tell the House exactly what did occur. It was at a time when we were much engaged in the discussion of old age pensions, and just after I had had—for my sins, I suppose—to preside over a Select Committee of this House on the subject. One of the leading newspapers in the Metropolis had taken up the matter very strongly, and was advocating right and left the imposition of a 5s. duty on corn in order to supply the needful means for a scheme of old age pen-

sions. I had to speak to a large agricultural audience; I did not arrive there until two or three o'clock in the morning. It was only after that that I was asked to speak, and, for something to say, I referred to this proposal. I strongly repudiated it. What I did say was that if the advocates of this view had confined themselves to the re-imposition of the old 1s. duty on corn, there would have been a great deal more to be said for the proposal, and it is upon that very slight foundation that charges of this kind are levelled against me.

I pass to the Resolution more immediately before the House. So far as I can gather from the course of the debate, the objections to the proposal are based mainly on four different grounds. First of all, I take the complaint of the mover of the Amendment that this proposal will, in reality, be more an injury than an advantage to the farmer, because of the duty imposed upon imported feeding stuffs. When this argument is examined, what does it amount to? The right hon. Gentleman has already made considerable concessions upon that point tonight which should go far to remove whatever objections were entertained before. I have looked into this question carefully, and what I find is that the amount of feeding stuff imported in the form of grain and meal is roughly 80,000,000 cwts., and in addition to that there must be 7,000,000 cwts. of what is called offal. Upon this point I may observe that complaints in regard to this foreign offal among farmers are numerous. They say that these foreign food stuffs have often been found to be injurious to the stock which feed upon them owing to the way they are prepared. This imported stuff is to be the subject of a trifling tax.

Let us look on the other side of the question. What is the amount of feeding stuffs produced at home on which animals are fed in this country? Take, for instance, grain and meal again to begin with. I have obtained the estimate from the most reliable authorities I can, and the amount of home-grown grain and meal used for feeding is put at 70,500,000 cwts. and offal 7,000,000 cwts., making 77,000,000 cwts., as against 87,000,000 cwts. from abroad. But there is a great deal more to be taken into account. There are all the root crops which are grown in this country, and which are estimated at 690,000,000 cwts. Then there is hay, which is estimated at 227,000,000 cwts., making a total from grain, offal, meal, roots, and hay produced at home, of 995,000,000 cwts. Besides this there is all the straw, which was estimated in 1895 at 10,000,000 tons or 200,000,000 cwts., of which a large proportion is used for the feeding of stock. Then there is all the grass and green crops which are fed off, not to speak of other things, such as carrots and lucerne, and the total cannot be less than 12,000,000 or 13,000,000 cwts.

Against this the foreign is less than 100,000,000 cwts: and we are asked to believe by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Somerset that the trifling duty imposed on this foreign import is to complete the ruin of the British farmer. Surely the farce of absurdity could hardly go farther.

What is the second objection? The hon. Member who opened the debate said that it was iniquitous to raise so large a sum as nearly £3,000,000 a year on what he called the food of the people. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not raising anything approaching that sum on food, for only a third of the tax falls on wheat, and by far the larger proportion falls on grain and meal other than food. Hon. Gentlemen opposite say they warned us it would raise the price of bread, and now with exultation they point to the fact that it has done so. I admit that there have been a good many quotations published in the papers showing a rise in the price of bread, but it has yet to be proved that these enhanced prices have been obtained up to the present time. I am not surprised. I always thought it probable that the bakers would try it on; but one thing is absolutely certain that unless there is some failure in the wheat crop of the world, or some other cause entirely apart from this duty, there will be no permanent rise in the price of bread, and no rise at any time that can be justly ascribed to the duty which my right hon. friend has proposed. Hon. Members appear to have forgotten altogether that the price of wheat is subject to constant and perpetual fluctuations, which occur not only from

month to month but often from week to week, which are often more than 1s. a quarter. The price of bread does not vary with these fluctuations, and never varies at all unless the price of wheat falls or rises to a very considerable extent; and there are various reasons for this. One is that wheat is so cheap in these days that the main cost of bread is in the manufacture and not in the material. Wages and the cost of machinery have a great deal to do with it, and it requires a very considerable rise in a quarter of wheat to make any practical difference in the price of bread on account of the very large number of loaves made out of it. It is perfectly true that there is no coin in existence which is small enough to express the fractional difference which could be created in the cost of a loaf of bread by the imposition of this trifling duty on wheat. It is exactly like the case of beer if a small additional duty is added to the barrel. It cannot be divided glass by glass, because it is too small, and the price of this glass to the consumer remains the same. So it will be also with the loaf. Go to the corn merchants or the bakers, and they will all tell you, as a matter of practical experience, that the price of bread does not change unless the price of wheat rises or falls to something like 4s. or 5s. per quarter. Whoever else, then, is to bear the burden of this duty, one thing is certain, and that is that it will not be the consumer of bread; and the answer to the question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, when he says, "We want to know, then, who is to pay the duty," is this: So diminutive will be the burden upon those on whom it does fall, that it will probably be impossible to trace it. In confirmation of what I have said, perhaps I may be allowed to read a telegram which has been placed in my hands only this afternoon. It comes from one of the largest bakers, enjoying the largest trade in the City of Glasgow, who is a well-known man. It reads:

"No advancen, or any chance of an advance, in the price of bread in Glasgow."

And yet Glasgow is the largest city, with the exception of the Metropolis, in the United Kingdom. Amongst the men of business in Glasgow I think it is well known that there are men who are as shrewd and acute in conducting their business as in any class throughout the whole of the country, and the telegram I have read represents the opinion of the bakers of Glasgow. If this be true, what becomes of all the predictions we have heard from the other side of the House? Perhaps I ought to say that this telegram was not sent to me, but to my hon. friend the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow, who made such an able and admirable speech to night, and who, unfortunately, forgot to quote this telegram before he sat down.

The fourth objection is, that in adopting this duty the House of Commons is being asked to take the first step in a return to the old bad days of Protection. Do hon. Gentlemen opposite who make that assertion remember what those old bad days of Protection really were? For a moment I will remind them. The sliding scale of 1828 affords, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of all. In that year the duty was 20s. 8d. upon corn whenever the price of wheat was less than 66s. a quarter, and it was to be increased by 1s. for every 1s. below 66s. What is the average price of wheat today? The average price for the last six months has been about 26s. 8d. per quarter. Under these circumstances, what would the duty have been today under the sliding scale of 1828? It would have been no less than £3 a quarter. In the face of this fact, do hon. Gentlemen opposite really think that we are on the high road to a return to the old evil days of Protection, which would have imposed, if it had been in existence now, a duty of £3 a quarter on corn? Let us go back to 1842, and what was the old bad system then? It was a considerable improvement on 1828, but even then the maximum duty was £1 a quarter, and it was to take effect when wheat was less than 51s. a quarter. Are we seriously to be told in the year 1902 that we are embarking upon a course which is to take us to those old and evil days which prevailed in the years to which I have just referred? Surely no hon. Gentleman opposite believes in his own heart for a moment that there is any serious danger or apprehension of anything of the kind. No Government would dare

to impose a duty which would seriously enhance the price of the food of the people, and if they did, the people would be perfectly well able to take care of themselves. The people have the power, and they would resist and defeat any Government which attempted it.

I cannot help re-echoing my right hon. friend's expression of amazement at the attitude of hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side; and when they are so apprehensive as to the future of Free Trade, I ask—Where is the faith that is in them? Why have they so little belief today in the fetish of Free Trade which they have worshipped so long? Has it all vanished, and has it all been driven away by the re-imposition of an old registration duty of 1s. on corn, which was concurred in for twenty-five years before by their great leader, Mr. Gladstone, which was re-modelled by him at one time before the repeal of that duty, and for the repeal of which there never was any demand throughout the whole of those years? The hon. Member who moved this Amendment said that there was an agitation for its repeal, and when he was asked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartmouth to name a single politician who had taken part in it, all he could do was to mention some Liverpool Association. I will tell hon. Gentlemen opposite this—that if any Government were to propose any tax on food which would seriously interfere with the wellbeing and comfort of the people, I should be among the first—Protectionist as I am alleged to be—to come to their assistance and resist it. But as for this tax which is now under the consideration of the House, I have a good deal more faith in the people than you. I deny that it will fall upon them; but if it did, I am sure that their patriotism is as great as that of any other section of the people of this country, and that they would be perfectly ready and willing to bear their legitimate share of any burden which may be imposed on them for the cause and for the sake of the Empire, which they value quite as much as the Member for East Wolverhampton himself.

I hope that I have answered most of the objections which have been taken to this tax. I have only this to say in conclusion: What is the alternative that has been suggested to this tax? That right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton proposed two things in the course of his speech. One was the proposal to re-impose the duty on tobacco, and the other to put a further duty on beer. I think these two suggestions were effectively disposed of by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton spoke of a bread tax. In my humble opinion, that is an entire misnomer. He draws no distinction whatever between a tax upon wheat and upon bread. He treats them as identical, whereas all experience in the past has shown up to now, while a shilling duty on wheat is a tax no doubt on that commodity, and probably will raise to that extent the price of wheat, I am right in my view, and I think it will be demonstrated by the result, that it will, and can, have no permanent effect at all on the price of the bread. The only other suggestion was that there should be a further addition to the income tax. Is that put forward really as a serious proposition? That would be an undoubted grievance to thousands of people in this country; and unless you do more than allege, unless you can absolutely prove that the duty proposed by my right hon. friend will seriously affect the price of the food of the people, that, I say, is an impossible alternative also. With all respect, then, I affirm that all the arguments which have been used against this proposed duty by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by a few on this side of the House as well, are entirely beside the mark, and when this duty is carried, as I have no doubt it will be, then I think we shall have reason to congratulate ourselves that Parliament at last, after many years, took courage to itself and decided to raise the revenue which is absolutely necessary for the country by proposing a tax which is open to fewer practical objections than any other tax that could be levied at the present time.

(10.54.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): There is something, I think, highly refreshing in the appearance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford as a leading advocate of Free Trade in this House.

If we could only hear him followed, either tonight or on future occasions, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield, we shall then feel secure for the future.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: This duty does not raise the question of Protection at all.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that if he considered the measure tended in any respect to raise the price of bread he should be against it. Well, bread, after all, has a close connection with corn. The Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it necessary, at considerable length, in referring to this question in his Budget speech, to found himself on the history of the tax, and he took shelter under the gabardine of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone. I think that has been pretty well disposed of satisfactorily by my hon. friend who so ably opened the debate, and still more by my right hon. friend the Member for East Wolverhampton. I will only add one contribution to it. In the discussion on the removal of this duty by Mr. Lowe, Mr. Cross (now Lord Cross) spoke. He spoke for Liverpool and South-West Lancashire, and he had the singular distinction in the election of 1868 of having defeated Mr. Gladstone. So far from treating this as a foolish bit of pedantry on the part of Mr. Lowe he welcomed it in these words—

"He rejoiced that even the suspicion of a tax on the food of the poor man should be taken away by the Budget."

I wonder whether he would rejoice at the suspicion that a tax on the food of the people is being replaced by the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman? That a suspicion, well founded or not, has been raised, and will be raised, cannot, I think, be denied. We have been wanting an answer all this evening from the Government and their supporters as to who is going to pay this tax. It is not a trifle. You may talk about a farthing or an eighth of a farthing on the quartern loaf, but what you are going to raise upon the imported corn and what you will necessarily raise on the corn grown in this country when you have followed the rise of the imported corn will amount to nearly £4,000,000. Somebody is going to pay that. We have had most elaborate demonstrations to the contrary. We have had a most ingenious agreement from the hon. and learned Member for the Stretford Division of Lancashire. He went on with an elaborate economical discourse showing that the consumer would not pay, and then I expected he would go on to tell us who would pay. But we are in this position—that £4,000,000 is going to be raised on these articles.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Why four?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I take £2,600,000 for what you raise here; then we are taking a third as the quantity that will be raised in this country. I believe, of course, that will follow—that that also will be raised, though it has this advantage—it will not go into the Exchequer at all. I should like also to have a second question answered—not merely who will pay, but who will gain in this matter. We know that the Exchequer will not gain the whole; who will gain the rest? These two questions remain totally unanswered up to the present in this discussion. The right hon. Member for Sleaford has made some remarks which do not come to a conclusion on this question, but which, I think, may help us to a conclusion. He said, and I agree, that the price of corn is mainly regulated by demand and supply; and if you have a bad harvest you have a high price, if a good harvest a low price. That is what my right hon. friend called "the world price of the commodity." But when you put a tax of this kind on a commodity, you add a fixed quantity to the price. For instance, the world price of corn rises 4s., and then it comes to a country which puts on an additional shilling, and therefore the price rises 5s. If, on the other hand, the price falls 4s., and comes to a country which puts on a shilling, the price in that country only falls 3s. That is exactly what the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us happened in the case of sugar. He told us that the price of sugar did not rise. But why did it not rise? Because there had been a very superabundant crop of beetroot, the consequence of which was that the price fell a great deal more than, or as

much as, the tax would have raised it. Therefore this shilling is additional to the market price, which is determined by supply and demand. That is extremely simple. Then the right hon. Gentleman tells us that the baker does not raise the price of bread unless there is a difference of 3s. or 4s.

It is quite plain, therefore, that this particular tax will determine the rising of the price, because it may bring the rise just to that point where the higher price is imposed. That is what exactly happens, and what always will happen. It may be a contribution to that rise in the market price which leads to the change in the price upon the small quantities distributed by bakers. Now, I affirm that in taxes of this kind they must and always will ultimately fall on the consumer. That is our proposition, but if you deny that, tell us on whom it will fall. We have a doctrine which we affirm and you deny. Here are three or four millions imposed by taxation, and you cannot tell us on whom the burden will fall. You have no views on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford says that no one can tell on whom it will fall, but surely that is a very important matter. It is quite plain that it goes through a number of different hands. First of all there is the importer on a large scale. Well, of course, he will try to get rid of the 1s. . It is an article you want, and there is the market price determined by supply and demand at the time, and you put 1s. tax against the market price of the day and you have to pay it. Some say that the tax will be paid by the foreigner. Why should he? I should like those people who think that taxes put upon commodities are paid by the foreigner to go and ask some man in the United States, or, better still, some lady who lives there, whether the duties which are put there on articles of dress that come from Paris or London are placed upon the foreigner; and if, on the other hand, they are not paid by the husband. I think that might dispose of the doctrine that taxes of this kind are paid by the foreigner. However, I dispense with this matter for the moment.

I will ask who is going to pay for it in England. The importer, who has to pay for it, will put it on somebody else. He probably puts it on the corn factor, who will put it on somebody else. He puts it on the miller, who, having turned it into flour, puts it on the baker; and then the baker has nobody else to put it on except the consumer. The consumer is the man who must have it in the end. There is an old and rather vernacular saying, "The devil take the hindmost," and it is the consumer who is the hindmost in this case. We, at least, have an intelligible doctrine on the subject, but what is yours? It is that you are to levy a great sum of money, and that it is not to fall on anyone, or, at all events, you do not know. I will not say you do not care. Before this change is made, we ought to have some clearer understanding on this subject. I am not going into any elaborate, economical speculation regarding it. I only wish to put the matter as it presents itself to me, in a commonplace, commonsense view, which, I believe, is consistent with the course of trade. Of course, I admit that the principal factor in this matter is the question of demand and supply — that regulates the market price. But I say that an artificial or exceptional charge of this character is a fixed aggravation of the price as determined by demand and supply, and that, therefore, in all cases, it must either add to the rise of the price, or diminish the fall of the price according to the variation of the market. The right hon. Gentleman said, "Oh, yes, that is all very well, but it is a theory." He might just as well say the multiplication table is a theory. So it is, but it is a theory founded upon fact and observation. All these economical propositions are merely generalisations upon the observation of facts which everybody is now acquainted with. There is the theory of Protection. We have found out what that theory is worth; we found out what its consequences were. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford very frankly told us what he thought of Protection when it existed. That is a theory which has been exploded by the experience of facts. Free Trade is a theory also. That is quite true. It has to be judged by the experience of facts, and it is experience of facts that induces us to maintain the theory of Free Trade and the propositions and conclusions to which it necessarily leads. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very confident on the night of the Budget that it was quite out of the question that there should be any rise in price.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH dissented.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think you have become a little less confident since. I noticed a singular change of tone. The right hon. Gentleman said, "Oh, yes, that is the usual consequence of the imposition of a tax." What is the usual consequence? He said, "There is a rise." He says bakers have only been waiting for his tax in order to raise the price of the lowest price loaf. Why has he given them that excuse, if without this tax they would not have done it? It is exactly what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford said just now. He said, "It is not until the market price has risen to a certain point that the price of the loaf will be increased by the baker." Yes, and that is just what you have done. The cup was nearly overflowing; you have poured more into it, and it has overflowed, because the price is raised. And the right hon. Gentleman says the thing will not last. How does he know that? In my opinion, whether it lasts or not, depends upon the question, What is the market price of corn? If the market price of corn goes up, of course it will last—the condition to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford alluded will have been fulfilled—that is to say, there will have been that rise in the price of corn which leads necessarily to an increase in the price of bread. It is perfectly well illustrated, as I venture to say, in the case of the sugar duty. You were not sensible of the increase in the price of sugar, because the fall had been so great that the increase due to the tax was lost in the fall which was due to the increase of the produce of beet. That illustrates, I think, extremely well what would happen. But allow me to say another word upon the absurdity of what I would call the small coin argument. It is said because the coin must be so small that therefore it is impossible that it ever can be levied. If that is so, that is a splendid principle to go upon. Only levy small taxes which will necessitate infinitesimal coins, and then nobody will pay because no coin is small enough. Put a small tax upon everything, arrange it so that when it comes ultimately to the consumer, the tax is so small that you cannot collect it, and then nobody will be hurt, and everybody will get rid of it, including the consumer, because the coin will be so small he will not pay it. Therefore you have any amount of millions, and you will not want the income tax or anything else. In the lines of the poet—

"My wound is great because it is so small."

But this wound, being so small, is represented not to be a wound at all. These discussions are founded upon jokes rather than upon real argument. However, all this is done upon the principle of "broadening the basis of taxation." That seems to be a comfortable phrase with a good many people. It is really an euphonism for multiplying taxes; by broadening the basis of taxation you multiply taxes. The more you broaden the basis the more taxes you have. Well, Sir, if there is anything which I thought I learnt in the last half-century it was that, if progress was to be made and if there was to be an improvement in finance effected, it was not by multiplying but by minimising the number of taxes. That was the policy of Sir Robert Peel. That was the policy of Mr. Gladstone, who took off more than 100 taxes, and now you are beginning to encumber your tariff which was the envy of the world. How many new taxes are there to be? What is the condition of the wealth of your country and the flourishing nature of the finances on that narrow basis of taxation compared with what they were when you had taxation on the broadening basis? We know what the condition of the country was when the taxation was on a broadening basis. In my opinion, if you have to add additional taxes to your tariff—if the necessities of your position, if the waste of the war, make that necessary—it is a great misfortune. It is a very evil reaction in regard to your taxation, and it is a thing to be repaired as soon as possible and not to be taken as a principle on which you desire to embark. I am extremely desirous not to detain the House on any hair-splitting argument. I wish to treat this matter upon its broad basis, if I may be allowed to borrow a phrase. But do not imagine that because this is a small tax, therefore it involves only a small question. In my opinion it is a very great financial question, and in another sense, and in a

greater sense, it is a great moral and political question and one of great importance to the people of this country. When the policy of Free Trade was established it elevated the people out of the condition of misery in which they were and which it is shocking to think of now. The misery of the people in this country when I was a youth, in 1843, when I lived in Lancashire was shocking. Starving mobs were tramping through the country and people were shot in the streets. That was not merely a shocking spectacle, it was a most alarming political and social evil. It is to Free Trade that we owe not only the change from all that, until we have from the right hon. Gentleman the picturesque scene which he described to us, when he talked of people with wages of 18s. a week—[AN HON. MEMBER: Thirteen Shillings.]—yes, 13s. a week, having not only bread but butter and meat every day of the week. I therefore admit that, upon his facts, they will not suffer much from his tax. They will only have to spare a joint or two every day. But there are tens of thousands, I fear hundreds of thousands, of people who have not even 13s. a week, and who do not have butter every day, who do not have meat every day, and who are not in a position of that comfort which we are happy to think the great mass of the population of this country enjoys. It is to that class that this tax will have its most dangerous application. Sir Robert Peel, speaking of the repeal of the corn laws, said that the daily labourer in his toil would eat his daily bread unleavened with a sense of injustice. I say that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is an act of injustice to people who are living on the margin of starvation; and if you believe that there are not thousands and thousands of such people in this country, you know nothing of the condition of things which exists. There are many homes in which very little else but bread is seen. I know it is a fact. In many houses both in the country and in the slums of our great towns the people can ill afford the smallest coins with which they can deal. This country is divided into various classes. There are people whose domestic economy is measured by the sovereign; there are people whose domestic economy is measured by the shilling; and there are people whose domestic economy is measured by the penny. I cordially agree with the statement which has been made that you ought to have had recourse to any and every tax before you descended to a tax on the food of the poorest of the people. The difference between wealth and poverty depends upon the margin; and there are many thousands of people in this country who have no margin at all, who do not know when they get up what they will have to live on during the day. You talk of the housing of the poor. Yes, Sir, these houses are wanted by the poor. But food also is wanted by the poor. I believe there are in this House many Members sitting on the opposite side whose sentiments do not differ from those which I have endeavoured to express. I know well enough the pressure of Party ties. I believe that not a few hon. Members on the other side have an uneasy feeling as to the results of this proposal, not only its political results but its social and material results upon a great number of the poorer of their fellow-citizens. I do not know what course they will think it their duty to take; but this I do know that the Party which sits upon this side of the House has its profound conviction of what is right in this matter and of the course which it will pursue. To this tax I feel confident that Members on this side will offer a resolute and persistent resistance. Though they may be defeated on this occasion and even in the contest upon this tax, the feeling of those who suffer and those who sympathise with them in their sufferings throughout the country will remove the injustice which this tax will impose, and relieve those who ought not to have their food taxed from the dangerous proposal contained in this Budget.

(11.29.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Speaker, I gather from the general tenour of the debate tonight that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite think they have an excellent platform case, which may serve them in the somewhat embarrassing position in which from other circumstances to which I need not further refer they at present find themselves. I have nothing to do with the platform case at

the present moment. I have to do now with the House of Commons case, the case which is offered to an audience in which there are critics and in which an answer may be expected, and I confess that so far as that case is concerned I think hon. Gentleman opposite cut rather a sorry figure. The truth is they are placed at a very great disadvantage, for they have not only the fiscal history of the country but the fiscal history of their Party to deal with; and the most honoured names in their Party are against them in this matter. They have struggled against adverse circumstances with remarkable courage, and the right hon. Gentleman has gone to the very verge of—I do not know how to put it—what is proper in this kind of controversy in one of the contributions he has made to the history of the question. He made a quotation from my noble friend Lord Cross, who interposed in the debate of 1869 upon the repeal of the 1s. duty. The words he quoted from Lord Cross were quoted accurately, as we might expect; but he forgot to quote the sentence which immediately preceded his quotation. The words were as follows—

"Mr. Assheton Cross"—as he then was—"observed that the total abolition of the 1s. duty on corn, not that he believed that the 1s. duty had the effect the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have the House to suppose, or that it had increased the price of wheat throughout the country."

The rest is what the right hon. Gentleman quoted. Lord Cross was quoted as having approved the abolition of the 1s. duty, and he did approve it; but in the sentence in which he expressed his approval he said that the duty did not have the effect the right hon. Gentleman says it has; and if it did not have that effect the whole scaffolding of the argument falls to the ground.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: All I said with reference to Lord Cross was that he said that one of his principal reasons for approving the abolition of the duty was that it would remove the suspicion that it had that effect.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, then the right hon. Gentleman will stump the country on a suspicion If he is prepared to go down to the constituencies and say that Lord Cross said that the 1s. duty did not raise the price of corn, but that its abolition would remove a suspicion that it did, he and I, after all, are not so very far apart. But hon. Gentlemen opposite have got to deal, from their own point of view, with more formidable figures in the history of this tax, than Lord Cross. They have got to deal with Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone, and it is really very entertaining to hear the principles they have thrust into the mouths of those eminent financiers and the version they have given of their opinions and objections. I think it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton who said that Sir Robert Peel was perfectly justified in imposing a 1s. duty as a registration duty, but that had he foreseen how much it would bring in he would not have imposed it. In other words, the tax would have been condemned by the very fact that it was fruitful. As long as it was a statistical tax, as long as it brought in no profit to anybody but the framer of economic statistics, it was perfectly legitimate, but when it brings in something considerable to the revenue it is a tax to be condemned. Is not that a most amusing view to put forward to a reasonable body of gentlemen? We are now told, mark you, to use the words of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that we are injuring that vast class of the population who are living on the margin of starvation. We are told that we are injuring them by this duty on corn, which was passed by Sir Robert Peel, and which was supported and amended by Mr. Gladstone. It at least had the same effect in those years as it has at the present time; and it had not the same excuse in those years, for in those years it was put on as a registration duty. Now it is put on as a great source of revenue. Therefore you are driven to this astounding conclusion—that it was justifiable to injure that class of the population living on the margin of starvation so long as your sole motive was curiosity about your statistics; but that directly it comes to dealing with a great financial difficulty in which the country finds itself, and which on all hands is recognised as requiring new financial methods, then what is legitimate as a registration tax becomes illegitimate as a source of revenue.

So much for Sir Robert Peel as he appeared in the version of his fiscal

policy presented by the right hon. Gentleman. Now I come to the equally astonishing version of Mr. Gladstone's financial policy as presented to the House of Commons. In this case the facts are, of course, beyond dispute. They are on record, and nobody attempts to controvert them. The facts are these—that Mr. Gladstone not only accepted the tax, not only imposed it year after year during his Chancellorship of the Exchequer, but actually remodelled it and introduced into it some kinds of grain that had not been introduced into it when left by Sir Robert Peel. He ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer; he became Prime Minister, and Mr. Lowe as his Chancellor of the Exchequer repealed the tax. These are the facts. At first sight they are embarrassing to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [AN HON. MEMBER: Not at all!] I said at first sight. How do they deal with them? How did the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, and in part the right hon. Gentleman for Wolverhampton deal with them? "Oh," says the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, "when Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer you must remember that Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister." And, no doubt, it was owing to that maleficent genius's suggestion that Mr. Gladstone was induced to retain, reform, and remodel the tax so injurious to that large portion of our population who live on the margin of starvation. But then he became Prime Minister. Then he was the real financial genius shining forth unobscured, and then he abolished it by his Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do not think that those who have most at heart Mr. Gladstone's financial fame will be induced in their more sober moments, in their more careful moments to endorse this theory; for what does it do? It wipes out of Mr. Gladstone's political career all these years in which he made his great reputation as a financier, all the years of the great Budgets, all the years on which I venture to think his most solid title to the gratitude of his countrymen and his great fame in the history of his country will be founded—wipes these out and puts the credit of them down to Lord Palmerston, and rests his reputation on a Budget which, no doubt, as one of its incidents, did abolish the duty on corn, but which is better known to history as the Budget in which the match tax—that inopportune and unhappy match tax—was proposed. [HON. MEMBERS: No, not that year.] I apologise for the error; but I rather think that much cannot be made of it by hon. Gentlemen who remember that when the match tax was proposed Mr. Lowe was still Chancellor of the Exchequer, still subordinate to the dominating genius who we are given to understand was always responsible for the Budgets of his Government, whether Chancellor of the Exchequer or not. Therefore, we are to regard Mr. Gladstone as not really responsible for the shilling duty on corn while he was Chancellor of the Exchequer; but only to regard him as responsible for the abolition of that duty when Mr. Lowe was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and all the other and unsuccessful eccentricities of Mr. Lowe's *régime*. I do not advise the admirers of Mr. Gladstone's financial fame, of whom I count myself one of the greatest, to rest their case upon the history of Mr. Gladstone as presented by the right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House in the course of this evening's debate. Considering merely the history of this tax, I cannot say that their efforts, strenuous as they have been, to extract themselves from the toils woven around them by that undeniable history have been very successful.

I now turn to what is more important than the history of the tax—namely, its merits. I agree that we are not bound in 1902 by the reputation of Sir Robert Peel, or of Mr. Gladstone, or of Mr. Lowe, or of Mr. Cross, or of anybody else. We have to consider this tax on its merits; and I should like to ask the House to consider for one moment on what grounds do they suppose that this tax is really going to make any important difference in the price of grain. Does any human being suppose that the imposition of a shilling duty on corn will bring into cereal cultivation in this country a single acre not under cereal cultivation at the present time? Does any one suppose that a single farmer in this country will say: "I could not grow wheat, barley, or oats at a profit before this tax was put on, but now I will try my hand at it?" I do not believe that

a single Gentleman acquainted with the conditions of agricultural life will advance that proposition. If, then, no new land will be brought under corn cultivation in this country, I ask the converse question —Is there a single acre in the United States, in Canada, in Russia, in India, in any country whence we draw our supplies, is there a single acre in any of these countries which will go out of cultivation because we put this duty on corn? Or is there a single quarter of corn which in consequence of this tax will be diverted from this country to any foreign port? I do not believe there is a single Gentleman in this House, whatever may be his prejudices in this matter, who will venture to answer those questions except in the negative. If then, that is so, what is the only conclusion to be drawn? If there is no more corn to be produced here, and if there is no less corn to be produced abroad which finds its way here, why is the price to be altered to the consumer? [Laughter.] I gather from these ironical cheers that I am speaking to a body of expert economists who have considered the question, and are perfectly capable of telling us on whom the incidence of taxation falls whenever a tax is imposed. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken declared that his Party had a creed, that creed being that the consumer always bears the tax, and he dared us to advance any dogmatic theory in the opposite direction. Well, I hope there is a larger knowledge of political economy diffused throughout the House than appears to be concentrated in some very high authorities on the other side. There is not a single student of political economy who will venture to say that the question can be answered *a priori* or dogmatically in regard to any tax. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman knows exactly who pays the export coal tax. He told us last year, I believe, the producer would bear that. Therefore, we have this interesting conclusion drawn from the economical studies of the right hon. Gentleman, speaking for his Party, that if America puts an export duty on corn, they would pay it, and if we put the same duty on in our ports we should pay it, that a shilling duty in New York is paid by Americans, and a shilling duty in Liverpool is paid by Englishmen. That is the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I never said that the producer paid the export duty. Ultimately the consumer pays the cost of the production, if any, upon an article.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I entirely dissent from that as a doctrine of economics, and I can quote on my behalf every single speaker against the coal tax in the debate last year. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was one of them. But was there a single Gentleman on that side who came down and said — "Whatever happens this month or next, or this year, the consumer will ultimately pay." If the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman is sound, ought we not to upset our whole system of finance and have only export duties? If the consumer in all cases pays the whole tax, it is simply a mathematical corollary that whatever tax we put on ought to be an export tax. I really think if the right hon. Gentleman will consider the conclusions to be drawn from his dogma he will be involved in more doubts and difficulties than he supposes.

The real truth is, putting aside these repartees across the floor of the House, in all seriousness, I do not believe any economist will dogmatically say how a tax is ultimately paid. It is wholly absurd to suppose that in all cases it is paid by the consumer. In this case, so far as I understand the circumstances, I believe only a fraction will be paid by the consumer. ["Oh, oh!" "Who pays the rest?"] The producer, the middleman, the other parties in the transaction. The idea that it must fall on the consumer I can assure the hon. Gentleman who interrupted me is an economic heresy of the grossest character, and he really ought to brush up his political economy, which at one time I am sure, was all that could be desired.

I think it is sometimes forgotten that the doctrine of Free Trade is not a mere speculative hypothesis, that it is not a metaphysical theory, and it is not even a theological dogma, but that it is a practical thing. Protection, be it good or bad, is only Protection when it prevents the foreigner from importing that which he can produce more cheaply than your own people, and

enables your own people to produce that in regard to which in the open market the foreigner would have an advantage. That is Protection. Free Trade is the converse of that; and really and truly, unless you can show that something of that kind will occur in this case, it is perfectly absurd to say that the doctrines of Free Trade are impugned. Unless you can show, with some measure of plausibility, that the English farmer will grow what without this tax he would not otherwise have grown, or that the foreign farmer will cease to grow what without this tax he would have grown, Free Trade is not touched; and I have only to ask that practical question to show that Free Trade is wholly outside the purview of this tax. Does any human being suppose that there is an English farmer so abandoned—his enemies accuse him of not always being animated with infinite wisdom—but is there a farmer so foolish, with wheat oscillating as it has, not by shillings, but by five, ten, and twenty shillings, as to alter his system of cultivation because a shilling duty is put on corn? Or, conversely, is there a single farmer in America, Canada, or elsewhere, who, in consequence of this shilling duty, is going to alter his system of cultivation or the amount of land he has under tillage? If those two questions are answered in the negative, as they must be, then, except as mere metaphysics, as a mere abstract speculation, and not as a practical matter, the doctrine of Free Trade or of Protection is not touched upon one way or the other. May I just read these figures to the House. The average price of corn for 1894 to 1900 were as follows:—23s., 26s., 30s., 34s., 25s., 26s. It will be observed that in a succession of years, from 1894 to 1900, the variations in the price of wheat were from 23s. to 34s. as the highest. ["It is falling."] What has that to do with it? That is a difference of 11s., and that difference was in only one element that goes to make the price of bread. There are a great many other elements, wages, rents—["Taxes"]—and many others, and corn is only one of them, though no doubt the principal one. But did we hear, in the year 1897, for example, when wheat was at 30s., 5s. above its present price, that the large portion of our population, which, in the language of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, are now living on the margin of starvation, were nearer that margin than they were before? It had absolutely no effect on subsistence at all. There you had a variation incomparably larger than, even on the most extravagant hypothesis, can be possibly produced by the present tax, and yet there was not a single complaint of the price of bread rising in all those years. ["Oh!"] Not a single complaint, and the idea that this population on the margin of starvation were going over that margin was never made by any human being. ["Oh!"] They were years of prosperity and of good trade; and I defy hon. Gentlemen opposite, from any authentic source or responsible quarter, to produce a single complaint that the condition among the poor of our people was aggravated by the high price in that year. If that be true, and I do not think it is seriously disputed, what nonsense it is to allege that all these tragic consequences are going to follow from a variation—if it be a variation—which is lost among the innumerable causes by which bread now rises, now falls—the harvests of the world, the course of commerce, and all the other great modifiers of trade. I do not mean to do more than warn the House, because I want to draw this debate to a conclusion, against the supposition that every step in the alteration of the price of bread up or down, which must be done in fractions not less, obviously, than a farthing or a halfpenny, necessarily acts in favour of the baker and against the consumer. That is not so. On an average of years I take it that the trade would lose as much as it would gain; sometimes they would greatly gain by it, at other times they would lose. But I caution hon. Gentlemen against the fallacy of supposing that the fact that the step must be a larger step in each case than is actually warranted by the change of price, shows that the step is always to the disadvantage of the consumer.

I would really ask whether, in the line taken up by hon. Gentlemen opposite, they are not really acting—I hope I may say so without offence—the part of demagogues rather than of statesmen. If I have used a word which they may perhaps think offensive, and they know I never desire to do so, perhaps they will allow me to explain exactly what I mean by demagogue in this case. I do not in the least mean an agitator, a man

who goes down to platform after platform and advocates his views; that is a perfectly legitimate operation carried on by all parties and sections in a free country [Ironical National cheers.]—yes, in a free country—within the limits of the Constitution. [Ministerial cheers.] No man, I think, will take exception to it. What I mean is something different. Those on whom I venture, with all respect, to pass a condemnation are those who go down, not counting on the intrinsic strength of their case, or on the legitimate arguments that they can bring before the people they address, but who rouse the ancient memories of old controversies and old wrongs, who hope that they may revive on the 1s. duty on corn all the passions legitimately roused by the Corn Laws, and by a duty which brought the price of corn up to 80s., and brought want and semi-starvation to many a cottage. There is not a man in this House who in his conscience thinks that such a state of things is going to be restored, or even approached, by anything that is being done under this tax; and to go down to a constituency and talk about the big loaf and the little loaf, to try to rouse popular feeling and passion, not by what is being done now, but by what was done fifty, sixty, or seventy years ago, that is the part of a demagogue, and that, in my opinion, deserves the condemnation of every honest man. I have confidence enough in the common sense of my fellow-countrymen, to feel convinced that, even if these courses are followed, and I hope they will not be, they will prove ineffectual. I do not believe that they will object to pay this tax. [Opposition cries of "Who?"] The working men of this country. I do not believe they will object to pay a tax which, in its effect upon them, in my opinion, will probably be nothing. [Opposition laughter.] I do not quite understand this laughter. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear," and renewed laughter.] I have tried with such small gifts as Heaven has provided me with to indoctrinate hon. Gentlemen opposite with the reasons for my opinions; but I fear they have failed to comprehend arguments which must be familiar to all students of these subjects.

I do not mean to trouble them with a repetition of those reasons. But I may repeat my opinion. My opinion is that at the most this tax is small; that in all probability it will be absolutely insignificantly imperceptible to the consumer; that I do not believe that in either of these events, whether the whole of this tax falls on the working men, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite supposes, or only a fraction of it, as I contend, I do not believe that the working men will object to it. They are the great body of voters of this country. They have in their hands the destinies of parties and the ultimate control of the policy of the nation. They have endorsed, as I think, by enormous majorities the course of public events which have made the imposition of this tax necessary. I do not share the opinion of them held by the hon. Gentleman opposite. I do not think so ill of them as to suppose for one moment that, having endorsed the policy, they are not prepared to pay their contribution, which, at all events, so far as this tax is concerned, is a trifling contribution, towards the expenses of the policy which they have favoured. Remember, they bore this very tax when wages were lower, when public prosperity was not at its present level, when there was no great crisis, no war—[AN HON. MEMBER: And no votes.]—no reason why it should be imposed, and they bore it without murmuring. Those who had the greatest title to express their views and to speak for them, never raised their voices against it. And am I to suppose at the present time, when the circumstances are reversed, when wages are high, when there is a great crisis, when that crisis is of their own creation—[Opposition cries of "Oh, oh!"]—when they have endorsed it, that our countrymen are going to shrink from a burden which forty years ago they bore with absolute cheerfulness?

*(12.10.) MR. BELL (Derby): It has been said by many hon. Members opposite that the working men of this country will raise no objection to this proposal. One evening last week when the question of Labour representatives was mentioned, it was asserted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he could not recognise Labour representatives in this House. I am not going to force myself upon the House as one tonight, but I will distinguish myself from hon. Gentlemen

opposite who support this tax upon corn and flour by saying that I am one of those persons who have worked for 22s. a week, paid 8s. of it for rent, and maintained a wife and family upon the balance, and I venture to say that that is something which no hon. Gentleman on the other side who so heartily supports this tax has ever done. Consequently, from that point of view I claim that I can speak with greater authority as to the effect of a corn duty upon a four pound loaf. It is from that point of view that I speak tonight and offer my protest against this tax. Last night I supported the income tax, and I did so because I believe that is a proper source of taxation, providing it is placed upon a proper basis, but I do protest against taxation of any description being placed upon the food of the poorer classes of the community. In this respect I am able to speak with authority on behalf of a large body of men, 150,000, of whom many do not receive more than 20s. per week, the majority of them being married men with families. It has been contended by some of the speakers on the opposite side of the House that this tax on corn and flour, small as it is, will not affect the price of bread, but either their contention is wrong, or else the statements which have appeared in the Press are wrong. From the statements which appear in the Press tonight we find that bread has been raised in price in different parts of London. This is a serious matter for the poor people. Not only are there a large number of workmen employed at 18s. and 19s. a week, but here in London alone there are about 500,000 people always out of employment, and taking the whole country throughout we find by the returns that there are nearly 1,000,000 workmen always out of employment. Those who are only partially employed, and earning a wage less than £1 a week, are unable to bear even a tax of a halfpenny on a loaf of bread. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House said these people had something to do with creating this war, and the necessity for this taxation. I have a very vivid recollection that when the present Government were returned to power nearly two years ago, it was distinctly on the understanding that the war was then over, and if that had proved to be correct the necessity for this increased taxation could not have arisen. I venture to say that the working men have been very much misled in this matter. Many in this country never knew the facts with regard to the origin of the war, but they heard statements made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, men who have been great supporters of the war throughout. I, at any rate, have not taken very much part in the war debates, but I cannot, on this occasion, when this taxation is placed on the food of the people, allow it to be said that the working men of the country really created the necessity for it by supporting or causing the origination of the war. That I totally deny, and I fail to find any one on the other side to support the statement which has been made. If we are going to have taxation to support wars of this description I venture to say that there are other sources open for it which have hitherto not been taxed, and I would certainly say before I could support the taxing of the poorer classes food, first of all those who can better afford it should be taxed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer rightly said that his Budget was very unpopular. No Chancellor of the Exchequer can ever introduce a popular Budget, be he whom he may, but the unpopularity may effect a larger or lesser number of people. Taxation such as is now imposed by the Chancellor will certainly touch the greater number, and, therefore, the unpopularity will be all the greater. I think the Chancellor might have arranged an equal standing if he had taxed the land of this country—the ground rents, royalties and way leaves. If he had done so his Budget would have been unpopular with those taxed, but the number would have been considerably less than those affected by the taxes now introduced. I offer these few remarks as a protest against taxing the peoples food. I do so as one of the working class who knows something of their wants, how they have to live and how much value they place on a halfpenny on the loaf of bread. I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to place this matter before working men in a fair way, and if they do so I venture to say that they will get their answer.

*(12.20.) MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I oppose this tax tonight, and I hope to have the opportunity of doing so in future discussions of the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House said that when the price of corn rose to 34s. per quarter, it did not decrease consumption. That is perfectly true,

but the reason of that is, that bread is the main staff of life, and that it is the irreducible minimum which people must have before they starve. Every luxury, and even every other comfort disappears before the consumption of bread begins to go down. I represent in this House a great industrial community, which is interested in one of the most important industries of this country, namely, the textile trade. I say that every additional shilling on the cost of the price of bread must come from somewhere, and it comes out of those things which can least be dispensed with. It comes out of the fund for the clothing of the people, and I maintain that a tax of this nature, not only will bring a greater number of the people of this country within reach of the workhouse, who now by strenuous struggle are able to maintain themselves just above that level, but it will also have a seriously damaging effect on the home trade of the country. Hon. Members who are connected in any way with the great textile trade of this country, will be in agreement with me when I say that a great change has come over that trade in recent years in the shape of an advance in the home trade. While in years gone by the great bulk of the manufactures went to India, China, and the uttermost parts of the earth, what has saved the textile industry during the last ten years has been the increase in the home trade. That increase has been due very largely to the cheapness of food, and I say that the greater part of the £2,500,000 which is expected to be received from this tax, will be withdrawn from the Exchequer in indirect ways. It will reduce the power of expending money on clothing; it will reduce the amount of employment; it will reduce the wages to be drawn by the workers; and it will reduce the income tax payable by the employers. I venture to say that not one-half of the amount of the duty will be net profit to the Exchequer.

We are often taunted by hon. Members on the other side of the House that we do not suggest an alternative to this tax. I venture to say that there is one very plain and simple alternative which ought to have presented itself to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We have complaints continually with regard to the income tax, that it bears unfairly between the earned and the unearned income. It is perfectly true that it is unfair in that respect, but there is a way of redressing that unfairness which would produce a vastly greater sum to the Exchequer than this miserable tax on corn. In my opinion, as the income tax rises so ought also the death duties to rise. If in place of this tax, which is necessarily a restraint upon trade and a reduction of the consuming power of the people of the country, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the income tax rose from 8d. to 1s. 3d. in the £1, had raised the death duties in the same proportion, there would have been produced, not a miserable £2,500,000, but over £12,000,000 extra revenue to the country. He would also by that means have redressed the injustice and inequality between the earned and the unearned income. We have had strange theories of economics brought before the House tonight, but none, I think, stranger than the one adduced by the noble Lord the Secretary for India in this House not very long ago, when he maintained in regard to India, and also in regard to this great city, that the increase of poverty and the increase of riches were signs of the prosperity of the State.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I said nothing of the kind.

*MR. WHITLEY: If the noble Lord will look back to his speech on that subject he will find it is so. I made a note of it at the time. I was only precluded by the closure at the time from replying.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is referring to a speech delivered during the present session, that will be out of order.

*MR. WHITLEY: I was only giving it to the noble Lord as an illustration of the strange economics which seem to have found a home on the Treasury Bench at the present time. There is a second alternative which might have been brought forward to produce the increased revenue required by the war without this tax on bread. If the Chancellor had graduated the taxes on licences he would have produced an

income, not of £2,500,000, but of over £6,000,000 towards the cost of the war. There were plenty of alternatives ready to the hand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he had had the courage to use them, which, instead of hitting the poorest of the poor, instead of hitting the trade of the country, and dealing an indirect blow at the prosperity of the country, would have raised the necessary income without any difficulty at all and without causing the slightest hindrance to trade.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

(12.28.) Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 285; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 126.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus H'nry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward,
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt. Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffi'd, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareh'm
Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)

Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W G Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H L B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J'hn Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hon Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (Walth'mst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Lieut-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Round, James
Sackville, Col. S. G Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles, Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tynes'de
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lanc.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Un.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnel, Lieut-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sh'ffi'ld
Walker, Col. William Hall
Warde, Col. C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Ta'nton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E (Notts)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Rt Hn J Pow'll (Birm.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bruner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidst'ne
Evans, Samuel T. (Glanmorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooley, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Haldane, Richard Bourdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinlock, Sir Jno. Geo. Smith
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty

Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. Jno. (Montrose
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal, (Tipp'ery, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick, (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (N'thants)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E)
Thomas, Alfred (Glam'rgan, E)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(H'stings)
Thomas, J A (Gl'm'rg'n, Gower)
Thompson, Dr. EC (Monagh'n N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke, (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred W. (Norfolk, Mid)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. William M'Arthur.

(12.43.) Question put accordingly, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

The House divided:—Ayes, 283; Noes, 197. (Division List No. 127.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Gl'sg'w)
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N, Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Capt. Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir Jn. Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Hbt. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chath'm)
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Furgusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Ernest

Forster, Henry William
Foster, Phillip S(Warw'k,S W)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs,Hn.A.G.H.(City of Lon.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn
Gore HnG.R.C.Ormsby-(Sal'p
Gore,Hon.S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon.George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green,WalfordD(Wednesbury
Greene,SirEW(B'ryS Edm'nds
Greene, HenryD.(Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton RtHnLordG(Midd'x
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nd'rry
Hanbury,Rt.Hon.RobertWm.
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Fredk. George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,ArthurHoward(Hanley
Heath, James(Staffords., NW)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hobhouse,Henry(Somerset,E.
Hope,J.F(Sheffield,Brightside
Houston, Robert Patterson
Howard,John(Kent,Fav'rsh'm
Hozier,HonJames,HenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel,CaptainHerbertMerton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon,Hon.Geo.T(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop
Keswick, William
Lambton,Hon.FrederickWm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence,Joseph(Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F.(Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee,ArthurH(Hants.Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N.S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther,Rt.Hn. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas,Col.Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth
Macartney,Rt Hn.WG.Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont,Col.H.L.B(Cambs
M'Calmont,Col.J. (Antrim,E.)
M'Killop,James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring,Hn W.F.
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore,Jhn Throgmorton
Milner,Rt.Hn.SirFrederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn.J.Scott (Hants.)
More,Robt.Jasper(Shropshire)
Morgan,David J.(Walthamst.
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrision, James Archibald
Morton,ArthurH.A.(Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,RtHnAGraham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray,Col.Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbt.Pike(Darlington)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pilkington,Lieut.-Col.Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley,Hn.M.W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie,Rt. Hn.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Round, James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col.Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Carr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis, Romford
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith,H.C.(Nth'mb.Tyneside
Stanley,Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart,Sir MarkJ.M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Ox'dUniv.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,ColSirC.E.H (Shef'ld.
Walker, Col. William Hall
Warde, Col. C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason,JohnCathcart (Orkney
Welby,Lt-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby,SirCharlesG.E.(Notts.
Wharton,Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams,RtHnJ P'well-(Birm
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse,Rt. Hn. E. R.(Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork,N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen,CharlesP.(Glouc.Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles

Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidst'ne
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea
Jones, William (Carnarv'nshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O Brien, Kendal (Tipp'rary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestly, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Seeley, Charles Hilton (Lincoln
Sheehan (Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan E.)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorg'n Gower)
Thompson, Dr E C (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, George (York W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (H'dd'rsfi'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone
and Mr. M'Arthur.

WAYS AND MEANS [21ST APRIL].—REPORT.

Resolution reported—

INCOME TAX.

"That income tax shall be charged for the year beginning the 6th day of April, 1902, at the rate of 1s. 3d."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

(1.0.) MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said that very few Irish Members had had an opportunity of discussing either the income tax or the duty on corn. With regard to the income tax, if he were an English Member he would support a 2s. income tax, and would oppose the corn tax or any other tax on the food of the people. But being an Irish Member he was bound to take a different view. He would oppose the income tax as he had

opposed all the war taxes. A great financial authority had laid down that the foundation for Ireland's claim for financial redress was to be found during the decade 1853–1863, in the equalisation of the spirit duties and the imposition of the income tax. That was the foundation of the Irish financial grievance. He would oppose an increase of the income tax for two reasons. The first was because it was a war tax, and his views in that connection were too well known to need repetition. Whatever incomes were assessed in Ireland were incomes of a moderate character. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had any financial courage and rose to the magnitude of the present occasion, when great war taxes were required, by imposing a graduated income tax, so that those who were most responsible for the war and would profit most by it would have to pay the heaviest share of the tax, he for one would not have opposed the additional penny. But the additional burden would now fall upon those in Ireland who already were staggering under too burdensome a load. He therefore thought that Irish Members would be justified in moving the exemption of Ireland from the present proposal. Those who called the tune ought to pay the piper, and while to his untrained and provincial intelligence it was a mystery how those who had supported the war could object to these various taxes which were necessitated by the war, the withers at any rate of the Irish Members were unwrung, and having opposed the war they would oppose every tax occasioned by the war. When the income tax was imposed in Ireland, it was expressly stated to be of a temporary character, but the assurances in that direction had not been given effect to. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come down as a public spirited Minister would have done, he would have made a declaration to the effect that, having some evidence of a national conscience, he would impose on England and Scotland, who had approved the war, an income tax of 1s. 6s. in the £, but that, recognising that the Irish people had consistently opposed the war, he would entirely exempt Ireland from the operation of the tax for the present year. Ireland certainly ought not to be called upon to pay any more than she paid last year. The tax we now collected in a most inquisitorial way. Business and professional men were continually being harassed and worried for declarations as to their income, in fact the methods of the Surveyor of taxes in Ireland had become intolerable.

*MR. SPEAKER: It will not be in order to discuss the methods of the Surveyor of taxes in Ireland on this question.

MR. FLYNN (continuing) said that if there was any sense of fair play on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the right hon. Gentleman would have come down with a declaration—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must warn the hon. Member of the Rule against tedious repetition of the same argument.

MR. FLYNN said he had no desire to offend against the Rules. He would not have raised the question on the present occasion had he been able to catch the Deputy-Chairman's eye at a previous stage. He begged to move that the increase of the income tax should not apply to Ireland.

*MR. SPEAKER: That Motion will not be in order, because I have already put the question, "That this House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

(1.15.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 297; Noes. 67. (Division List, No. 128.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus He'ry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex

Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (B'rm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Wore'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Robert Hunter
Cranborne, Viscount
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Durning Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn. C. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S Edm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. L. G. (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (K'nt, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, R'b't Trotter
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hope, J. F. (Sheff'd, Brightside
Horniman, Frederick John
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans'a
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth
Lawson, John Grant
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Leveson Gower, Frederick N. S.
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, David J. (Walthamst'w
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Moss, Samuel
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newnes, Sir George
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Norman, Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Penn, John
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Priestly, Arthur
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Rigg, Richard
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Round, James
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seeley, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C. (North'mb. T'nesi'e
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.

Stock, James Henry
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'dUn'v
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan Gower
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wallace, Robert
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay. T
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt. Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (Birm.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Austruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kend'l (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Thompson, Dr. E C (Mon'gh'n N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

WAYS AND MEANS.

The following Resolutions of the Committee of Ways and Means agreed to on the 17th April read—

STAMP DUTY (BILLS OF EXCHANGE).

"That on and after the 1st day of July, 1902, 2d. shall be substituted for 1d. as the stamp duty on bills of exchange payable on demand, or at sight, or on presentation, or within three days after date or sight."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES.

"That the additional Customs Duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased Duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTY ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

"That the additional Excise Duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections 6 and 7 of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the 1st day of August, 1903."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

"That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and to amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue."

CUSTOMS—TEA.

"That the Customs Duty now charged on Tea shall continue to be charged until the 1st of August, 1903 (that is to say)—

Tea . . the pound, Sixpence"

Bill ordered, upon the said Resolutions and upon the Resolutions of the Committee of Ways and Means agreed to this day, to be brought in by the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

FINANCE BILL.

"To grant certain Duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provision for the financial arrangements of the year," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 165.]

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 23rd April, 1902.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Verbal Amendment made; Bill read the third time, and passed.

LEYLAND AND FARINGTON GAS BILL, LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL, ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Urban Districts of Ballymena and Strabane, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Wyndham.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Urban Districts of Ballymena and Strabane," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 166.]

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1863, and the Acts amending the same, relating to the Dunderry Drainage District, in the county of Meath, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Austen Chamberlain and Mr. Wyndham.

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1863, and the Acts amending the same, relating to the Dunderry Drainage District, in the county of Meath," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 167.]

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

Sir ROBERT GUNTER reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills, That, at the meeting of the Committee this day, a communication was received from Mr. Layland-Barratt, one of the Members of the said Committee, stating that he was unable, on account of illness, to attend the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

CAVEHILL AND WHITEWELL TRAMWAYS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 3).

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE reported from the Committee on Group 3 of Railway Bills, That the parties promoting the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill had stated that the evidence of Alfred Carter was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Alfred Carter do attend the said Committee upon Friday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Alfred Carter do attend the Committee on Group 3 of Railway Bills on Friday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

SALFORD CORPORATION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL, BIRKENHEAD CORPORATION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 5).

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE reported from the Committee on Group No. 5 of Railway Bills, That, there being no further business ready for the consideration of the Committee, they had adjourned until Friday next, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).

Mr. BILL reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT BILL,

CLEETHORPES IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Rhyl; Upper Ipsley; Sheffield; Luton; and Marylebone; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Hammersmith, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Stockport, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Wigan, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Luton; Retford; Halifax; Paddington; Apsley Guise; Drighlington; and Keighley; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Inquiry, 1901, with Evidence and Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee of Inquiry, 1901, with Evidence and Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (LAND REVENUE).

Copy presented, of Papers regarding the Land Revenue System of British India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2770 to 2772 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 576 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.

Address for "Return showing the working of the regulations made in 1886 for carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with statistics setting forth the number, cost, and results of the proceedings instituted by the director in accordance with those regulations from the 1st day of January, 1901, to the 31st day of December, 1901 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 264 of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

COASTGUARDS (MEDICAL ATTENDANCE).

Return ordered, "of Expenses charged to the Government for medical attendance for each of the Coastguards stations respectively in the districts of Youghal, Queenstown, Kinsale, Skibbereen, and Castletown, from the 1st day of January, 1900, to the 1st day of January, 1901,

with the number of men at each station and the name of the medical attendant." -(*Mr. Crean.*)

BEER BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*(12.20.) MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): It has fallen to my lot on the present occasion to introduce to the consideration of the House a subject which is not altogether a new one, but which contains certain new features connected with legislation on this topic. The real question underlying this Bill, from the point of view which I wish to put before hon. Members, is whether it is desirable or practicable to secure for drinkers of the English beverage known as beer some assurance that it contains those ingredients of which in large measure it is supposed to be composed, viz., barley, malt, and hops. Whatever other things may be used, whatever other adjuncts may be utilised, malt and hops are, after all, the prime constituents of beer. It is so very large an article of consumption that, apart from the interests involved, that this House cannot be indifferent to what is really a matter of national interest, namely, to secure that due care is taken to have it brewed from wholesome materials. Such materials should be not merely wholesome; they should be of a kind most suitable to the purpose. Speaking apart from the interest of the general public, which ought not to be left out of sight, there may be said to be four parties particularly concerned in this matter. I put first the one on whose behalf I am here to-day—the consumer of beer. Another who has a claim to be considered is the producer of beer, and the third is the grower of barley. I am not going to say much on his behalf, because the interests of my constituents are those of the consumer of beer, and not of the barley grower. Still, we must not lose sight of the case of the barley grower, because, unless due encouragement is given to him, we cannot expect that beer, properly so called, can be produced in fit condition for the British market. The fourth party concerned is the Inland Revenue Department to which it is proposed to entrust the carrying out of the provisions of the Bill.

Now, the consumer of beer and the grower of barley are united in support of this Bill. It is quite true, indeed, that some barley growers would like more stringent provisions to be introduced into the Bill. In the measure of last year it was provided that beer should be brewed entirely from malt and hops, but in this there is nothing to prevent any brewer who can produce a good article using within a limited scope certain other sound materials. The Bill is in fact a concession to certain arguments used last session on behalf of the beer producer. It was alleged that owing to the difficulties of the British climate British barley was not suitable for brewing beer, unless it had added to it the element of sunshine. We were supposed to be short of sunshine in this country, and it is therefore necessary to introduce into the manufacture of beer a sugar element which is not necessary where a country has a larger amount of sunshine, in order to produce an article suitable to the prevailing taste of the times. As I have before said, my constituents are consumers of beer, and think I may add that they take much interest in this question. Last year, of course, a great deal of feeling was aroused by the sale of beer into which foreign deleterious matter had been introduced. I quite admit that that particular accident has been probed to the bottom, and I hope and believe that the same mistake is not likely to happen again. It was disastrous, not only to the unfortunate consumers of beer but to those who produced this unsatisfactory article, and under these circumstances I am confident greater caution will be exercised in the future. But I cannot help contrasting the state of things existing twenty years ago with that which prevails at the present day. In all populous places the smaller brewers are fast disappearing, and the trade is falling into the hands of great companies. During the days when small breweries were in existence beer was brewed by many persons entirely from British grown barley and hops. No other ingredients were introduced, and those who thought that beer made of malt and hops was the most suitable

form of drink had no difficulty in finding places where it could be obtained. But, as I have said, these small breweries are fast disappearing, and the consumer has no choice but to go to houses which are supplied from the large breweries. It occasionally happens that one company dominates a whole district, which is absolutely at the mercy of one brewer. I do not think I need go into the causes of this change. but I may say I believe that the high duty on beer has largely contributed to it. All we are asking under this Bill is that brewers shall brew from barley malt and hops, coupled with such other ingredients as may be necessary to produce an article saleable and suitable to the present taste. I cannot help remarking that this is not the only country in the world where such restrictions would be imposed. They are imposed in other countries, and those places where they are the most stringent are not the least famed for the excellence of their beer. I may instance the case of Bavaria, where the restrictions are as strong as anywhere, and yet the Bavarian beer has a reputation second to none in the world.

I will now say a few words on the Bill itself. I see some exception has been taken to the definition of beer. All I will say in regard to that is that it may be amended in Committee, and I am sure that the promoters will not be unwilling to listen to any suggestions for a more satisfactory definition. Then we come to Clause 3, which provides that—

"It shall not be lawful in brewing or preparing beer for sale to use a less quantity of barley malt than eighty-five per cent. of the total saccharine yielding materials employed, the quantity of materials other than barley malt being calculated according to their respective equivalents in malt, as fixed for the time being for the purposes of the change of duty on beer."

That really is the cardinal point of the Bill. In it we make a concession to the manufacturer of beer, by giving him power to include in his beer a certain amount of other saccharine matter. While we would desire that beer shall be made wholly of malt and hops, we are willing to concede this percentage in order to take the first step to set up a standard. In my view that is the first thing to be done, and this conception constitutes the main difference between this Bill and previous Bills. We prohibit absolutely the use of any substitute for hops, and, as far as I know, that proposal does not meet with any great opposition. Clause 6 deals with the importers of foreign beer, and prohibits the sale of such beer, in this country otherwise than under the description of imported beer. The duty of carrying out the provisions of the Bill is thrown upon the officers of the Inland Revenue. I do not know what those who represent the Inland Revenue Department may have to say on this point. What we desire, in the first place, is to set up a legal standard for beer, and I believe that generally the brewers of this country being honest men will work up to that standard if required to do so by law, and it will not need a very large amount of supervision to see that the standard is adhered to. I believe that they will make the returns which the Inland Revenue Department now require, giving details of the substances used in brewing, and if that is done the officers of Inland Revenue will find but little addition to their present duties. There may, of course, be a residue of brewers who may require more attention in the way of seeing that they carry out the law, and in their cases it is possible that a certain additional amount of inspection will be required. It may be necessary, too, for revenue officers to visit such breweries and apply certain tests; but if the returns are properly made, I think there will be entailed but little additional work on the Department. Of course the amount of work depends largely on the number of breweries. Now, in 1853 there were 45,294 breweries which had to be supervised by the Inland Revenue Department. In 1879 the number had been reduced to 22,278, and now there are only about 6,000; thus the industry being concentrated in a very few hands, the amount of supervision required is very much less than it was formerly, and the duties of the officers are proportionately decreased. I can only add that if the Department desire to put in any modified form of words to guard against undue work being laid upon it, we shall be ready to listen to any suggestion of the kind in Committee.

I now come to the consideration of the nature of the opposition to the Bill. Two statements have been put forward, and from them I gather that the

opposition comes largely from the brewing trade. I do not see a trace of opposition from any other source. My hon. friend the Member for West Bradford has put on the Paper an Amendment in the following terms—

"That this House declines to proceed with the consideration of a Bill interfering with freedom in the manufacture of beer in this country, which, whilst it imposes upon the scientific development of British brewing industries arbitrary restrictions that cannot be enforced upon foreign competitors, in no way provides safeguards for the public health, or secures for consumers a guarantee as to the purity of the materials employed."

What is the meaning of the reference to foreign competitors? The Bill provides for labelling a foreign production as an imported production. At the present time the consumer has no means of knowing of where the beer comes from, but under the Bill he will know when a foreign article is sold to him. The main objection which my hon. friend puts forward, however, is that the Bill interferes with the freedom of the manufacture of beer in this country; and that it imposes on the scientific development of British brewing industries arbitrary restrictions that cannot be enforced upon foreign competitors. I should like to know what he means by "scientific development." Does he mean the substitution of other ingredients for barley malt, and hops? If that is meant, then we have the statement of the best brewers, who say that barley malt is mainly the proper thing to use. This, indeed, is the view of scientific men. The hon. and learned Member for the University of London told us only last year that barley malt is absolutely essential to good beer. What are the scientific methods with which the Bill interferes? It interferes with nothing but the unlimited use of ingredients in substitution for British malt. And, therefore, if the Amendment means anything it means that the Bill is an interference with the substitution of some other material for British malt. I speak in the interest of the consumer when I say we have a right to prevent that substitution, and I ask the House to affirm that the British consumer is entitled to know that his beer is made mainly of malt and hops. We do not propose to place any restriction as to where the barley comes from, although we do hope that the Bill will result in making a better market for British barley. We may come to the time when chemical compounds will take the place of natural productions. If it be possible to get a good extract from petroleum or some other ingredient which can be made into a wholesome liquid, and from the consumption of which no harm will result, by all means let it be manufactured, but it must not be called beer, and in that case the consumers of beer will have no right to complain.

Another section of the opponents of the Bill are represented by the statement which has been issued by the Country Brewer's organisation. They say first that it interferes with the freedom of the manufacture of beer. Of course, it does. Then, too, they claim that scientific development is interfered with, and they further point out that the Bill does not guarantee the purity of beer. It may not do that, but it goes a step in the direction of guaranteeing it. They talk, too, about the principle of the free mash tun. It is alleged that when Mr. Gladstone substituted the beer duty for the malt duty, there was a sort of compact by which brewers were to be left absolutely free for all future time with regard to the material they employed in brewing, and apparently no question as to the wholesomeness or soundness of the ingredients used was ever to be raised. I do not know whether that view is going to be maintained on the present occasion, but I cannot think that anything which is not of a wholesome character will be demanded. It must be remembered that before the introduction of the free mash tun, the process of brewing had often to be disturbed, and the great boon offered to the brewers was that the process of brewing was to go on uninterruptedly. But it was not intended to make profits more secure making the choice of brewing materials unlimited. Now that is not necessary. Brewing has always been a profitable business and I should be sorry indeed if it ceased to be so. It would be a bad day for the consumer of beer. I do not think, however, the brewers have any ground for fear that their profits will be destroyed by providing a reasonable security for the use of malt and hops. I do not know that I need labour the question any further. There are many hon. Members who wish to speak on it. The Bill has

been introduced in the spirit of conciliation, and with a view of protecting as far as possible the interests of all who are connected with the production of beer, while securing that a proper and wholesome beverage shall be laid upon the table of rich and poor alike. I beg to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(12.45.) MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I think we shall all, whether promoters or opponents of this measure, feel that the House approaches its consideration under somewhat different conditions to those which prevailed when the Bill of last year was under discussion. Then we had a great deal of excitement out of doors, which, of course, had its influence on this House, in connection with what was known as the arsenic scare. Indeed, as I listened to the gentle and—to use his own word—conciliatory speech of my hon. friend the Member for Preston, and contrasted it with the far graver tone adopted by the hon. and learned Member for Peterborough, who was in charge of the measure of last year, I could not help feeling that the difference in tone between the two speakers very aptly illustrated the change in public feeling upon this question of legislating for the brewing industry. Last year my hon. and learned friend, in his peroration, said—

"Now that we are brought face to face with the stern facts, after the deaths which have occurred from poisoned beer, after the widespread sickness and suffering from poisoned beer, after the public has appealed to us in various petitions to this House for protection from this pest lence that walketh in darkness, I maintain that the present state of things ought not to be suffered to continue for an hour."

And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Div sion, in the course of his massive contribution to the debate, observed—

"My first object was to prevent the recurrence of the poisoning of hundreds and thousands of people in all parts of the country."

This Bill is not only introduced in circumstances widely different from those which prevailed last year, but it is in itself an entirely fresh Bill, and it must be considered on its merits as it stands, because it enshrines proposals which have not previously been the subject of debate. It is for these proposals that I ask the consideration of the House.

One essential point of difference between this and previous Bills is that in former measures it was sought to earmark beer by labelling part malt beer as an inferior article. This Bill proposes to admit that beer may contain 15 per cent. of other substitutes for barley malt. The argument we heard last year that a man ought to know what he is drinking obviously falls to the ground, since, if it was chemically impossible to distinguish between beer made with 40 per cent. of substitutes and beer made of all malt, how much more difficult will it be when it contains 15 per cent.? I do not think that it will be contended that this is in any sense a Pure Beer Bill, and I shall be surprised to learn that it is put forward as a safeguard against such a lamentable accident as that which occurred a couple of years ago. The materials, the use of which my hon. friend proposes by this Bill to limit, are not deleterious to health. The evidence of Mr. Salamon before the Departmental Committee on Beer Materials is interesting on this point. He is a gentleman who has had great experience as an analytical and consulting chemist, and whose authority is widely recognised in this House as well as outside. He was asked: "Is there anything deleterious in the use of malt adjuncts?" His answer was—

"Absolutely nothing; I know of no deleterious substitutes employed in brewing, and I may say I should certainly know of it if they were employed, as I have the means of ascertaining everything that goes on in a very large number of breweries."

And he goes on in the course of his evidence to point out that, without some prepared materials, such as starch sugar, adopted for fermentation, and the like, it would not be possible to produce the beer required today. Later on in his evidence he says that if English brewers are to hold their own at home and abroad, it is quite impossible that they can brew only from English barley malt. The Committee, moreover, in their Report, said—

"With regard to glucose made from sago, maize etc., it is generally admitted that there have been great improvements in the process

of manufacture in recent years, and we believe that all impurities which might be considered injurious to health are eliminated."

And again, later on in their Report, they observe—

"From the evidence put before us we are satisfied that no deleterious materials are introduced into beer by way of substitutes for hops."

Moreover, the Royal Commission, now sitting, in their preliminary Report, observe—

"As regards the ingredients of beer, other than brewing sugar and malt, which are liable from their preparation to contain arsenic, we are satisfied that, by the exercise of care in the selection of these materials (*i.e.*, maize and rice), no risk of the introduction of arsenic into the beer need arise."

The enforcement of a strict limitation of the kind proposed in this Bill must, I think, have the effect of causing the brewing of stronger and more alcoholic beer in order to aid the preservative powers of the beer, because the use of sugar, rice, and maize enables the brewer to brew a weaker and more popular beverage, and at the same time gives it power of preservation. The very limited use of these materials, sugar, maize, and so forth, will necessitate the brewing of a beer of greater gravity.

In connection with all these Bills an idea is widely prevalent outside this House, and held by some Gentlemen on this side of the House as well, that the British agriculturist will profit by the passing into law of a measure of this kind. In that connection I should like to read a letter which I have received from one of the leading brewers in the city of Bradford. He says—

"I am at present using about 25 per cent. of sugar and other materials, and 75 per cent. of barley, of which from 50 to 55 per cent. is English grown barley; and if this Bill is passed it will be necessary for me to exactly reverse the proportions of British and foreign barleys in the future."

This will, therefore, tend to injure the British farmer by the increased use of foreign barley in British breweries. You will, by passing this Bill, injure the sale of British barleys, and particularly of those grown in the Northern counties, and indeed of any which are not first-class barleys, but which under the conditions prevailing today can be utilised in breweries. It may be that my hon. friends in framing this new measure have thought that by allowing 15 per cent. of malt adjuncts to be used it would leave it possible for the brewer to rely on home-grown barley for his malt, and at the same time, by limiting the malt adjuncts to 15 per cent., to increase the quantity of barley he would require. This argument seems to me to break down. The only way in which the total quantity of home-grown barley used by brewers can be increased would be by increasing the use of malt adjuncts, which to a great extent supply those qualities which home-grown barley generally lacks, and for which foreign barleys must be resorted to in their absence. Clause 4 of this Bill prohibits the use of hop substitutes. So far as we can gather from the evidence brought before the Departmental Committee, only a very small amount of hop substitutes is used in brewing in this country. I believe they were resorted to during a year of hop famine, but certainly at the present prices of hops I imagine it to be exceedingly unlikely that any English brewer would resort to the use of substitutes. Clause 5 is a very important clause, as it provides the machinery by which these new regulations on the manufacture of beer are to be enforced. As my hon. friend has said, the duty is placed upon the Inland Revenue officers. Let me quote the Report of the Departmental Committee on this point—

"We are satisfied that in the present state of scientific knowledge it is not possible to determine by chemical analysis with sufficient certainty to obtain a conviction whether malt adjuncts have or have not been used, except, perhaps, in cases where excessive preparations of such adjuncts have been employed. Consequently, a law making declaration of materials compulsory could not be enforced if we were to rely upon analysis for deduction and valuation of it."

If that be so, how can these regulations be carried out? At the present time the Excise has no absolute check upon the quantities of materials used. They have, it is true, printed forms, which a brewer fills in with regard to his daily operations; but these are looked upon by the Government officials as rough checks, and are only required in the rare instances where a brewer has to be charged with duty upon raw materials instead of upon his finished work. The reason why there is such a wide margin between the standard and the actual results produced, is that the duty is very rarely charged on the raw material. Malt on

these Excise forms is entered in quarters, and the weight per quarter may vary from 10 to 20 per cent. One may see at a glance that to work the Bill properly the malt must be weighed under the supervision of an officer, who will have to be always on the premises—always, at least, when the operation of weighing is going on; and in a large brewery, where the raw materials are handled by machinery and passed in enormous bulks, it is not easy to see how the weight can be checked. As to sugar, I should like to read a letter I received from a gentleman who is largely interested in the trade. He says—

"Sugar is entered in a column in quarters; seeing, however, that the Excise are content to levy their duty upon the resulting worts, the officers of the Excise are aware of the fact that a brewer could readily use sugar without making an entry. If the Bill were adopted, it would necessitate the keeping of a strict account in the brewery, and having the sugar under lock and key. Moreover, unless the Excise officer were always on the spot, it would be possible to make an entry of sugar to be used for the day's work, but yet to add it to the various vessels containing the brew in whatever proportion the brewer chose. For example, the brew might contain 5 per cent. or 25 per cent. so long as the total of the day's operations did not exceed 15 per cent."

I would incidentally point out to my hon. friend that no correction of error or accident which might occur during the brewing operations would be possible. I think it is obvious that to work the Bill satisfactorily would entail a very large increase in the number of Excise officers, and I need not point out that this work must in that respect be rather a harassing one to the brewer. I do not, however, resist it on that ground, and if considerations of popular health and convenience or the like can be put forward, I agree that we ought not to allow the interests or convenience of any industry to stand in the way of the public good.

I hope we shall hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer some expression of opinion as to the effect of this Bill upon the revenue of the country. Last year, the right hon. Gentleman, speaking on the Bill then before the House, said—

"There is nothing to interfere directly or indirectly with the revenue or with the freedom of the mash tun, which some regard as such a prized privilege in the brewing of beer"

I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will say the same of this Bill today. I have to thank him for his courtesy in sending me, and I believe he sent also to the promoters of the Bill, some interesting figures for the year ending 30th November last year. I have worked out a calculation based on figures for the year ending 30th September, 1900, and as the figures do not vary very greatly between the two Returns, I think the House may allow me to place before them the figures prepared on the basis of the year 1900 Return. The quantity of materials used in brewing during the year ending 30th September was as follows: Malt, 57,167,801 bushels, or 7,145,975 quarters; sugar, 2,980,039 cwts., or 1,303,767 quarters; and rice and maize, 1,201,845 cwts., or 525,807 quarters. The percentage of ingredients was: Malt 20·94, and deducting 1,500,000 quarters for all malt beers, 24·5; sugar to malt 17·4; and that of malt to rice and maize, was 7·0. The sugar, which is mostly colonial cane sugar, is returned at 149,000 tons, and on reduction from those returned as using no sugar the proportion would be 89,000 tons. The quantity possible under this Bill would be 60,000 tons, and deducting the average duty of £2 12s. per ton there will be a net loss to the revenue of between £156,000 and £158,000 per annum.

In the present Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by putting the duty at 3d. per cwt. on all imported corn, has already gone a long way to limit the use of maize and rice in brewing, and to absolutely restrict their use to 15 per cent. would surely be to crush out of existence an industry that has done much to secure better and lighter beers for the people of this country, and provides, not even barley excepted, the purest and most wholesome materials used in brewing. A great deal was said last year as to the danger of effecting a divorce between science and the development of an industry, and I believe the passing of this Bill into law would be a very serious blow to the advancement of science in relation to brewing operations, because any old rule of thumb brewer can brew from barley, hops, yeast, and water if he has sufficient time given him for the operation, and can secure a sufficient price for his beer. I am afraid that the inevitable effect of this Bill will be to take away from men of science the inducement to introduce fresh methods or

to use new and perhaps more wholesome materials, if possible, than hitherto used. No one who has watched the growth in popularity in this country of the light German beers which are now so largely in vogue can fail to realise the enormous gain to the commerce of Germany, which has resulted from the application of science to the brewing industry there. My hon. friend put one or two questions to me on this matter. He seems to speak of substitutes, or aids to development, with something of a feeling of horror—as if these things conveyed in themselves the essential principle of permitting adulteration. But all the evidence given before the Commission appointed to inquire into that subject goes against him, and he cannot show that the use of these substitutes, or aids to development, are deleterious to health. Surely, until that can be done, it seems absurd to place restrictions upon the manufacture of beer from perfectly innocuous substitutes. I will leave to others the task of dealing more closely with the scientific aspects of this industry.

I have tried to show, at all events from my point of view, that the passing of this Bill will not only fail to assist, but will positively prove to be detrimental in its incidence to the British agriculturist. I think I have been able to show that the passage of this Bill will in no way benefit the public from the point of view of safeguarding them against poisonous substances; that it will impose additional cost and trouble in the administration of the Inland Revenue Department; and that side by side with the increased cost there will be an inevitable diminution of the revenue of the country. I venture to submit that it will most seriously cripple the scientific development of an industry which has already sufficient difficulties to face in the way of dealing with foreign competition. It is for these reasons that I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'This House declines to proceed with the consideration of a Bill interfering with freedom in the manufacture of beer in this country, which, whilst it imposes upon the scientific development of British brewing industries arbitrary restrictions that cannot be enforced upon foreign competitors, in no way provides safeguards for the public health, or secures for consumers a guarantee as to the purity of the materials employed.'"—(*Mr. Flower.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*(1.16.) MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I have not taken any part previously in these controversies, but the Bill which we are now discussing is of a very different character from that which we had discussed in former years. It has been contended previously by the promoters of the Bill that beer should be made only from barley, malt, hops, and water, and all hop substitutes prohibited. The promoters of this Bill have abandoned that contention, and now admit that substitutes are not to be condemned on the ground of their impurity or danger to public health, and they come forward with a proposal to limit these to an empirical standard of 15 per cent. There is no virtue in this 15 per cent. It will achieve no public object whatever; it is merely an attempt to fix some proportion between substitutes and barley in the interests of agriculturists. My object in rising is to warn the agriculturists of this country that so far as I am able to see they will gain no advantage whatever from the proposal now before the House. My experience leads me to think that it will rather diminish the proportion of English barley used in brewing. There is no doubt that in an average season in this country not sufficient barley is grown of good quality to meet the requirements of brewers. There must be some admixture of something to enable the deficiency of English barley to be used so largely as it is today in brewing. There are only two substances which I know that can be used with advantage—saccharine or glucose substances or foreign barley. There is no doubt that the saccharine substances achieve their purpose much more readily than foreign barleys, and in much smaller quantities. Therefore that leads me to believe that if the use of saccharine substances was limited in this country, the only result would be the larger use of foreign barley and less English barley. But I will not dwell on so scientific a subject. I am one of the old rule-of-thumb brewers, but very often, even with the so-called rule-of-thumb, scientific knowledge is

necessary to achieve success. I rose to oppose this Bill. My sympathies with the agriculturists are very great, and I oppose this Bill because it will not in any way favour their interests or safeguard them. This Bill is no safeguard, either, to public health. It will only entail, and must entail, considerable expense and trouble upon the Excise, and on all those grounds I oppose it. Perhaps I might enlarge for one moment on the changes which would happen to the Excise. At present the brewing materials go into the brewery in bulk and are checked so by the Excise, and if the amount produced in the mash tun is not what it is deemed it should be you are charged the excess on the amount that you make. But if this Bill passed there would have to be a man constantly in the grinding room to see the proper quantity of malt and other materials going in, and that the proportions did not exceed those prescribed, because it is conceded that no chemical analysis will find this out subsequently. If this duty is intrusted to the Excise, no doubt they will carry it out impartially. They cannot assume that one brewer is honest and another dishonest, but must carry out their duties, if these are imposed upon them by this House, impartially to all alike. I do not wish to examine this question scientifically or go more fully into that aspect of the matter. I oppose this Bill because it can be of no public advantage, and will only damage the agricultural interests, and therefore, I shall not support the Second Reading. I support the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for West Bradford.

*(1.22.) SIR JOHN DORRINGTON (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I support this Bill. I am not able to controvert all that was said by the hon. Member for Derbyshire, but only this morning I received an assurance from a country brewer that this duty will not throw any substantial additional work on the Excise, but that, trusting as they generally do to the honesty of the brewers, the whole thing would give no trouble whatever if it is really put into practice. I am rather surprised that the hon. Member for South Derbyshire, representing as he does a great brewing community where a very small proportion of substitutes is used, and where they buy largely not only of foreign but English barley, should have made so much in his speech as he has done of the injury that might accrue to British agriculture. I rather believed with regard to the other "Pure" Beer Bills introduced before this, that there was some risk to British agriculture but there certainly is not so in this. I cannot concur in the expression of the Committee that sat to consider brewing materials that it cannot be permitted for a liquor made from malt and hops only to be called beer. Public opinion is that beer ought to be made of malt and hops, and until last year, when the scare occurred, the public believed they were drinking a liquor made from barley, malt, and hops, and were not aware how largely sugar and other substitutes entered into beer. When there is an impression of that sort, it is right on the part of the Legislature to see that the standard the public has made for itself shall be made the legal standard by some definition. The analysts who were examined before the Commission complained that they had not a definition of beer, which made their duties very arduous. We provide for that; we put in a limit of 15 per cent. We want to protect the British public from this growing evil of substituting other materials for the barley, malt, and hops from which the Englishman believes his beer is made. Chemical science in England says that you should use these sugars and brewing substitutes, but chemical science in Germany has come to a diametrically opposite conclusion, and it is only reasonable therefore that this matter should be well considered. Bavaria has absolutely prohibited the use of any sort of substitutes, and in North Germany it is nearly the same thing. The North German brewers, according to the evidence given before the Beer Materials Committee, have asked their Government to place on them the same restrictions that have been placed on the brewers in Bavaria, because they believe it would increase the consumption by giving greater confidence to the people who drink their beer. That is exactly what we want to do here. When we have the scientific knowledge of Germany opposed to the scientific knowledge of England, how do we know the scientific knowledge of

England may not come in time to ask for a Pure Beer Bill for England? With regard to the deleterious substances which the hon. Member quoted, I know of no absolutely deleterious substances in beer dangerous to health. Of course, in using these invert sugars we come very near to serious danger. If carefully prepared, they are not only perfectly harmless, but useful; but if not carefully prepared, it becomes a dangerous matter. When you go to a great factory with the high reputation of Messrs. Garton, you are perfectly safe, and can rely on the extreme care that has been taken to see that every sample they send out is free from arsenic. But suppose these substitutes are made an ordinary marketable commodity bought anywhere, we should have no such ground for assurance that the danger which occurred at Manchester will not occur again. These dangers are a good reason for prohibiting the use of substitutes except within reasonable limits, and to the extent only to which it may be necessary to employ them in order to make a perfect beer. At present the average is less than 10 per cent. If this Bill passes, the condition of the law, from the point of view of the public health and a knowledge of what is used, will be put in a much sounder position than it is at present. The Legislature has imposed restrictions on the manufacture and sale of margarine and butter and other articles, and what the promoters of this Bill desire is a similar measure of protection to the consumers of beer.

(1.30.) DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said the House had been told that all the opposition to this Bill had come from the brewers. He was not a brewer, and had no interest in the trade. He did not even hold any brewery shares. He approached the consideration of this Bill from the point of view of the man in the street who sometimes drank a glass of beer. He would not venture to discuss the scientific side of the question. In his view, this Bill was opposed to the dictates of common sense, was retrograde in character, injurious in itself, and might become dangerous. The Bill, though less stringent, was more dangerous than that of last year, and under no circumstances could he support it. He did not know who wanted the Bill. Scientific authority was against it. He sniffed Protection in it. Protection was in the air now. The Budget had dealt a heavy and crushing blow at the principles of Free Trade, and the present was, he thought, another advance in the direction of Protection. Still, he could not see whom the measure was going to protect. It was intended to protect the farmer. He represented an agricultural constituency. His constituents were the best barley growers in the world. If he thought this proposal would enable his constituents to get better prices for their barley, he might pocket his Free Trade principles and vote for the Bill. But it would do nothing of the kind, whilst it would give the consumer no protection against dangerous adulteration. What provisions were there in the Bill to protect the consumer against such an injurious ingredient as arsenic, which was accidentally introduced during the process of manufacture or otherwise, and which appeared to have destroyed so many lives and constitutions? They did not know yet how this arsenic got into the beer, and would it not be a more sensible plan if the promoters of the Bill waited until they heard the Report of the Royal Commission which was now sitting? The clause dealing with hop substitutes was highly oppressive. The only people whom the Bill seemed to protect were the hop growers, who would obtain great advantages if this Bill passed into law. It would also confer some benefits on the large brewers of this country, who would therefore agree to one of the clauses in this Bill which protected them in some way against the invasion of large quantities of light beers. He entirely agreed with his hon. friend who moved the rejection of this Bill in his estimate of the admirable qualities of these light foreign beers. He drank them himself. They were all in the interest of temperance. They contained little alcohol, and they were altogether light, innocent, and refreshing; and he wished they were more largely consumed in this country than they were. The consumption of what he considered a beneficial beverage would be hampered by the operation of this Bill. Clause 4 seemed to him most extraordinary. They had evidence from the Commission, which no one could deny, that

substances used as substitutes for hops were entirely devoid of any deleterious effect. The late Lord Playfair had stated that the various ingredients, such as might be occasionally used by makers of beer, were not in any way deleterious to the public health. Then what was the reason of placing on the brewer this highly restrictive penalty? Surely it would give rise to great confusion in the Revenue Department, and it would do no good at all to the public, which this Bill was supposed to protect. A still more oppressive provision was that in which a brewer was to be fined from £50 to £100 if any of these substitutes were found in his possession. Suppose he happened to have a tonic, say an infusion of gentian, in his possession at the brewery, or any other article which was, or might be, used in the manufacture of beer. What would happen then? He (Dr. Farquharson) very much preferred the old Bill, in which the brewer was compelled to state from what ingredients the beer was made; and if the present measure had contained a provision of this kind, he might have seen his way to vote for it. This penal clause was a serious matter, and constituted a new offence, for which a man might be summarily convicted, without appeal, and fined a large sum of money. This was a condition of things to which he would give his determined opposition. The first thing to be considered about beer was that it should be palatable. It should be free from injurious ingredients, and of such a kind as would not be deleterious to the public health. This Bill gave no guarantee of that kind, and he would therefore oppose it.

(1.43.) COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): The speech to which we have just listened was most interesting by reason of the most singular state of confusion into which the hon. Member got. Among other things, he told us that in the event of a sufficiently high duty being put upon foreign barley, he was prepared to vote for the Bill. I think it most unfortunate that in preparing his opposition on the present occasion he should have apparently studied a Bill which was brought in last year, and not the Bill we are discussing at the present moment. But my reason for rising was to repel the attack the hon. Gentleman has made on the fourth clause. How does he justify the statement that he has made that this clause is highly oppressive, when he can hear from many Members of the House, and has heard from every brewer, that these hop substitutes are not used?

DR. FARQUHARSON: Then why do you want the clause?

COLONEL BROOKFIELD: Because we propose to make what they say is the case the law also. I was sorry that the hon. Member, who has scientific attainments, should have thrown in his weight with the opposition to this hop substitutes clause, for this is the first time I have heard any attempt to attack that clause, which, I understand, is generally accepted even by the brewers themselves. I always feel diffident in advancing the claim of apparently so small an industry as that of the hop-grower, but until the speech of the hon. Member we were met with general sympathy from every quarter. We have no reason to conceal the fact that the clause has a more or less Protective object, and that we are anxious to promote an industry which gives such exceptional and remunerative employment to the poor people of London and elsewhere. Brewers sometimes ask why we were not content with introducing a hop substitute Bill. But I have already stated that we for many years did introduce a Bill of this kind, but we were extremely unfortunate in the ballot, and the measure was always blocked when it came into the House. Therefore we are willing to throw in our lot with our more powerful friends the barley growers.

I refreshed my memory by reading over again the speech made on this Bill last year by the hon. Member for the London University, and the conclusion I came to was that the hon. Member was boldly advocating the interests of science in the abstract as against the health and comfort of the general consumer of beer. The motto of the hon. Member, like that of the vivisectionists, appears to be—*Fiat experimentum in corpore vili.* Nevertheless, I see a

great inconsistency between some of the observations that have fallen from time to time from the hon. Member for the London University and the remarks of my hon. friend the Member for West Bradford. He foreshadowed that this Bill would produce a more alcoholic kind of beer. Last year the hon. Member for the London University deprecated the passage of this Bill on the ground that it would restrain brewers from the laudable object of producing the greatest amount of alcohol. I have often wished to know the attitude of the temperance party with reference to this question, and whether they consider it is worse to produce the maximum amount of alcohol in any given product. I certainly believe that whether we produce more alcohol or less by legislation of this kind, our object ought to be a pure product, and one which would be wholesome to the general consumer.

There was one point in the remarks of the hon. Member for the London University which interested me very much, for he referred to the necessity for defining whether beer came under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. Very often, when we are striving desperately hard for some particular kind of legislation, we find that it already exists if we only knew how to put the machinery in motion, and I should like to know from the Minister who appears to be representing the Government on this occasion something upon the plain question of whether beer is food, and whether the prosecutions which have taken place in connection with the arsenic scare, were not taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. I believe they were. I do not, however, think this in the least does away with the necessity for this Bill, but I think it would strengthen the position if we knew that we could appeal to a Bill which is already in force. It would be very presumptuous on my part, and indeed for most hon. Members in this House, to attempt to argue with scientific experts in their criticisms of this Bill, but I should like to hear from the hon. Member for the London University something upon the subject of what are called preservatives. I should like to know why it is, when there is such a very rapid consumption of beer going on, when barrels are full in the morning and empty in the evening, becoming more and more necessary to use what are called preservatives of different kinds.

I think in the beginning of the last century when heavy beers were used and kept for a long time, to the best of my knowledge none of these preservative chemicals were employed. On the other hand those beers were more heavily hopped in those days, and I think it is that question which scientific critics ought to answer, and they ought to inform us whether it is not true that the hop is one of the most effectual and wholesome preservatives that can be employed. I have had to consider in connection with this Bill the meaning of the term "hop substitute." As the House is probably aware, one of the functions of the hop is purely that of a preservative. Its object is not only to impart a bitter taste to the product and to clarify it, but it is also to preserve it, and I shall have to consider at some future stage of this Bill, which will no doubt pass this year as it did last year, whether we should not hold to this clause prohibiting the use of any hop substitutes and prohibiting also the use of any preservatives whatsoever. I think I may call in evidence the Central Chamber of Agriculture, and say that they are strongly in favour of excluding all these preservatives of this particular kind, and as to the efficacy of the hop as the old-fashioned preservative which the general public wish to see used I should like before sitting down to quote some evidence which is in my possession.

Messrs. Briant & Meacham made experiments in 1895 and 1896 testing the efficacy of hops as preservatives. These tests showed that wort kept in sterilised flasks for twenty-one days without hops developed acidity, expressed as lactic acid, to the extent of 0·414 per cent., whereas when new hops were added the acidity did not exceed 0·090 per cent. An additional quantity of hops still further reduced the proportion. Therefore we claim that hops are all sufficient and most wholesome for the preservation of beer, and that as any preservative displaces hops they should each and all be classed as substitutes and prohibited. At a later stage of the Bill it may be

desirable to emphasise this fact and include some of these preservatives in the schedule to be added. We shall not forget the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman who last spoke, and he must forgive me for attacking him because he made such a wanton attack upon the interest which I represent. We shall always remember the opinion he has expressed in favour of the free use of every kind of abomination that can be employed as a substitute for hops, and I should like him to take some opportunity of stating whether hydrosulphite of lime, hydrosulphite of magnesia, sulphite of calcium, sulphite of soda, potassium sulphite, bisulphites of soda, and many other abominations such as salicylic acid and sulphurous acid used as preservatives in beer, tend to make that article more wholesome.

DR. FARQUHARSON: But these cannot be considered as substitutes for hops.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD: I am contending that they are substitutes for hops and I have quoted them in answer to the hon. Member who dealt with this question. I apologise for having detained the House so long, but I merely wished to give my warm advocacy to this Bill, and I express the hope that it will pass the Second Reading by a very large majority. (2.5.)

(2.35.) MR. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire seemed to have some great fear that the supporters of the Bill were animated by Protectionist instincts and desires. Perhaps he will be somewhat reassured that I myself am in favour of this policy, and I think he will not suspect me of being a Protectionist. I think he will also feel very much reassured if he will study the Division List which somebody has sent round to all the Members of this House showing how Members voted on the last occasion when the Bill was before the House. He will not suspect of any Protectionist leanings a large number of the Gentlemen who gave their support to the Bill on that occasion—not this Bill in its present form, but this Bill in its essence. I should like to refresh the memory of my hon. friend and his scientific friends. He may have forgotten that on the last occasion its supporters were not by any means the only representatives of the barley interest and of the country districts, for every working man representative in the House supported the Bill. The hon. Member for Battersea, and the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, whose interests are peculiarly those of the working classes, were in favour of the Bill, and therefore I am entitled to take the position I have always taken, because the measure tries to carry out what the public asks for. My own experience in regard to the subject of pure beer, is that this proposal is more heartily received by those who are not farmers, than by the farmers who are in favour of it. Perhaps these farmers take a purely Protectionist view of the situation. If this Bill should pass, I believe it will be for the public interest, and if it does have a beneficial effect on the barley interest, it is not for me to complain. I do not complain, and I wish the farmers all the prosperity they can get out of it.

I support the Bill for the reason that I believe it is wanted by a large majority of beer consumers. If that is so, what we have to decide now is whether it is a fair and proper thing to have a standard for beer. I believe that until a few years ago, the vast bulk of the beer drinking public absolutely believed that in drinking beer they were drinking the constituents of barley and hops, but their confidence of late years has been rudely shaken. I have a recollection that in my childhood I was taught that the constituents of beer were barley, hops, and malt, and I believed it until quite a late period of my career. Now that the public have some knowledge of the state of affairs, I think they are fairly entitled to demand something in the nature of a definition of beer, or at all events a standard of beer. If that is so the question arises whether we in this Bill have given a fair and reasonable standard. I was not concerned in the preparation of the Bill from the outset, and I do not exactly know what guided my hon. friends who prepared the Bill as to the particular

proportion of glucose matters, or matters other than malt when they put down 15 per cent. in this Bill, but when I saw the figure my mind went back to a remarkable speech we had five years ago, when a similar Bill was before the House, and when Mr. Osborne, then the Member for Chelmsford, spoke on the subject. It was an epoch-making speech so far as this controversy is concerned, because I think it has been present in the mind of every man who has drafted a Bill on the subject ever since. It affected the House very much at the time. Throughout the House it was felt that a notable contribution had been made to the debate by a man who thoroughly understood the subject. He was a brewer, and was very much respected both professionally and otherwise. He gave us particulars how he brewed himself, and why it was that pure beer at that time would render it impossible to carry on business on the present lines. He told us that he used 80 per cent. of Essex barley, 10 per cent. of foreign barley, and 10 per cent. of glucose or sugar, and from these he got his brew. The particular barley he bought was not of specially fine and valuable quality. It was ordinary Essex barley, and his beer I have no doubt was as good as his character and reputation. At that time the whole of the brewing interest in this House applauded his utterances, and I believe the trade took him as their spokesman on that occasion. We have given an extra 5 per cent. margin, and I put it to my scientific friends in this House, who are so anxious that the claims of science should not be overlooked and who say that science should assist in brewing the best possible beer, that that is an extremely good margin to work upon, and if science cannot do something to improve beer with that margin then science is not showing itself in the best way. I should like very much to see any brewer get up and say that he used more than 15 per cent. I do not think there is any brewer who would commit himself to that statement, and I do not believe that any brewer in the House does use it.

The hon. Member for West Bradford, who moved the Amendment, referred to certain communications he had from brewers who did use malt, and I think he rather astonished the House, and I think he would have astonished the scientific Members of the House who were not then present, when he stated that in an American brewery 70 per cent. of malt substitues was used. A friend of mine the other day, who is interested as a large shareholder in an American brewery, told me that he was rather disturbed by the fact that he got little or nothing from that investment. I told him that there was wonderful recuperative power in beer, and that the investment would get better as time went on; but after these revelations I am inclined to withhold my judgment. If they find it necessary, in order to get a market at all, to use such an enormous amount of malt substitutes, I think they must be uncommonly near the end of their tether. I hardly believe that many American brewers use such an amount of malt substitutes as 70 per cent. of the whole brewing materials. I remember last year an admirable speech was made by a scientific gentleman, the Member for the University of London, and his speech was founded on the fact that undoubtedly malt was the flavouring material, at all events of beer, and that it did not very much matter how you got the alcohol. One hon. Member seemed to think, so far as one could gather from his speech, that he was in favour of a material to make as much alcohol as possible, but he was quite clear that the flavouring material could be got from malt only. We shall expect the hon. Member on this occasion, although I see he signed the Whip on the opposite side, to tell us why it is when you use so much barley it is necessary to use more than 15 per cent. of sugar. Even supposing that 15 per cent. is putting it a little too low, that is a point which the Committee can consider. Our only wish is that there shall be established some reasonable standard in which the public may feel confidence. To tell you the truth, I do not think the public would feel confidence in what I would call the unlimited application of science to beer. I do not know that I feel very much confidence in the unlimited application of science to wine. I noticed last night that the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed

to think that British wines were almost indistinguishable, so far as flavour went, from foreign wines.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): When properly managed.

MR. PRICE: That may mean properly managed with scientific assistance. I confess that I have not had the opportunity of dining with the right hon. Gentleman or with the hon. Member for the University of London, but I do not know but that I would rather have a dry dinner than one with scientific wines. I confess it does not fill me with any trust in their taste, either in beer or wine, to think that scientific interference may form such a very important feature of it. I quite admit, and I think we all admit, that probably the production of beer has been very much improved by chemical discovery. To enable chemical discoveries to be made, and to allow them a margin to still further improve the brew of beer, we leave them 15 per cent.; but if the Committee thinks at a subsequent stage of the Bill that it should be 20 per cent., that could be made the margin.

I believe that the promoters of the Bill have honestly tried to meet the objections made against it from time to time. I think we need not imagine that the growers of barley in this country are going to be ruined if so large a percentage of added material is allowed, and I do not know that the brewers are going to be ruined. I do not think there is a single brewer in this House—and there are several of the most eminent—who will get up and say that they use more than 15 per cent. of substitutes; and that being so, where does the objection to the Bill come in? With reference to the machinery of the Bill, and the method by which it is to be discovered whether or not its provisions have been infringed, there is undoubtedly a difficulty in obtaining convictions in cases of the kind. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading said very truly that we would have to rely more on the good faith of the brewers than on the detective quantities of the officers of the Inland Revenue. I am, however, afraid that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may object to new duties being put on the officers of Inland Revenue. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Tewkesbury Division, in his very able speech, quoted an authority whose view was that these duties would be very light and almost nominal, and a very small addition to the present duties of the officers of Inland Revenue. I would put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, even if there were a serious addition to the duties of these officers, it would be worth it, in order to have a standard of purity for beer. The public are distinctly in favour of it. I do not think it would be possible to attend any public meeting composed chiefly of the working classes without finding that they were in favour of a proper standard of beer. It is the favourite and usual drink of the working classes. They like to have it good; and if it is good, there is no particular reason why they should not drink reasonable quantities of it. It is in the hope that we have at last discovered a reasonable solution of the difficulty that I earnestly commend this Bill to the favourable judgment of the House.

*(2.53.) MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): Whatever may be the particular merits of this Bill, the supporters of it may, at all events, congratulate themselves on the extreme weakness of the opposition. No attempt has been made to show that the demand which hon. Members on both sides of the House are making is an unfair demand, or that it is less on the part of the public now than it was when my hon. friend first brought in his Bill ten or twelve years ago. No attempt has been made to grapple with the Bill as put before the House on the present occasion. The hon. Member for West Bradford, who began the opposition to the Bill, appeared to me to take the weakest possible line. He told us that, so far as questions of public health went, there was no need for this Bill at all; and he fortified that view by quoting from the evidence given before the Beer Materials Committee, and also the Report of that Committee. In his evidence before that Committee, Mr. Salamon said that there were no deleterious ingredients

used in the manufacture of beer, but only two years later the arsenical poisoning occurred. In the Report of that Committee it was stated that the Committee believed that in the manufacture of glucose all impurities were eliminated, and yet it was glucose which caused all the deaths which occurred two years ago. It might have been accidental, but certainly the impurities were not eliminated, and that shows that something is wanted in the interest of the public health. The hon. Member proceeded to use once more the old argument that if this Bill were passed, less English barley would be used. The hon. Member must evidently have been considering the Bill of last year, not the present Bill; because the point that if no saccharine matter other than malt is to be used foreign barley would take its place has been fully and fairly met in this Bill, as the promoters provide that 15 per cent. of saccharine matter may be used in the manufacture of beer. Then my hon. friend proceeded to give examples, and I think he was rather unfortunate in referring to Munich beer. Munich is in Bavaria, and in Bavaria the most stringent rules are in existence against the use of substitutes. At Neuberg, in Bavaria, on May 26th, 1885, twelve brewers were sent to prison for twenty-one days for using hop substitutes. There is nothing in this Bill which would send my hon. friend to prison for using hop substitutes; but, as he referred to Bavaria in opposition to the Bill, I think I may also refer to it as a very strong reason in support of the measure. Bavarian beer is so good that that in itself is a very good reason why we should pass some regulations prohibiting the use of substitutes. Then the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire also made a speech against last year's Bill.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I was not present in the House last year.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: The hon. Member told us that he voted against the Bill.

DR. FARQUHARSON: That is a mistake.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: The hon. Member told us that he would have voted for the Bill of last year had he been present, but that he objects to this Bill. Yet the one thing he objects to in this Bill is a clause which was also in last year's Bill, and it is on this particular clause, with reference to hop substitutes, that I wish to speak at the present moment. I do not profess myself to have any detailed knowledge of brewing; but, after all, this is not entirely a brewers' question. It is a question for the general public. I do not profess to be able to state in any full sense the views of the barley growers, but I know a little about the hop question and the use of substitutes. It is objected to this clause that it is unnecessary, because it is said that hop substitutes are not used. I say in reply that we know in Kent that they are used, although perhaps not to any great extent just now. If they are not used, how comes it that advertisements constantly appear in brewers' papers offering them? I have two examples from the *Brewers' Journal*. One is—

"The hop supplement called H.S To save one-third of the hops, and supplement them with valuable keeping properties. The H.S. produces a most delicate flavour in the finest pale ales. By post, packet equivalent to four pounds of the best hops, 1s. Private testimonials from high-class brewers who have used it successfully for 17 years."

Here is another advertisement from Burton—

"A hop composition which gives a fine Kent aroma. Price on application."

People do not advertise articles in papers like the *Brewers' Journal* unless they are used, and my answer is that these advertisements are pretty good evidence that hop substitutes are used. Before the Beer Materials Committee, on which the hon. Member for West Bradford relied to such an extent, very important evidence was given by Mr. Read, who, I am sure, will be recognised as a great authority on these questions. He said—

"It appears clear that there is no efficient substitute for hops any more than there is for barley, and although the quantity of substitutes used may at present be comparatively small owing to the low price of hops, they would no doubt be again largely reverted to if the price of hops materially appreciated."

The price of hops is at present so very low that it does not pay to use hop substitutes, or at all events it only pays to use them in very small quantities, but directly the price of hops went up these substitutes would be used to a very large

extent, with the most deleterious effect on the public and to the great disadvantage of the hop growers. Hops are a very variable crop. The price varies more than in any other kind of produce. It may vary from £2 per cwt. to £15 or £16 per cwt. Year after year the price of hops may be very low, and hop growers may sell at a loss; but they look forward to a year when the price goes up, and then they take their profit. They must take their profit on an average of years; but if hop substitutes are brought into use in the year when prices are high, the hop growers will be deprived of their profit. My predecessor in the representation of Tunbridge gave some very significant figures on this point. In 1882, which was known as the year of the hop famine, the price of hops was very high, and the hop substitutes which were generally used rose in price in an extraordinary way. In August of that year Colombo root rose from 22s. to 95s.; camomile from 40s. to 120s.; quassia from £5 to £40; guinea grain from 32s. to 60s.; and cherita from 3d. to 3s. That shows that in that particular year, when the price of hops was exceedingly high, these substitutes were in great demand, and the price went up. I contend, therefore, that hop substitutes are used, and I contend also that it is very unfair on the public that they should be used. The danger of impurity in the brewing of beers depends most of all on the extensive use of a great number of ingredients. If the ingredients are few, the impurities are all well known and can be guarded against; but if we are to allow the use of almost any chemical substance in order to supplement the use of hops, we not only run the risk of using deleterious substances but of substances which, though not deleterious in themselves, are capable of rendering other ingredients injurious. Therefore, at all events, we ought to pass this clause, which prohibits the use of all hop substitutes. We recognise the difficulty of dealing only with a branch of the subject, and we feel, therefore, that it is a wiser policy to support a Pure Beer Bill as a whole. It is because I wish to see all hop substitutes put an end to, and that the public demand for a standard of beer should be granted, that I hope this Bill will receive Second Reading.

Mr. Griffith Boscawen.

*(3.4.) SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): My hon. friend who has just sat down seemed to confine his observations to the exposure of the alleged frequency of substitutes for Kentish hops, but I take it that the object of this measure is rather to discourage the use of sugar and other substances in the manufacture of beer. Therefore, I think my hon. friend does not take a general and comprehensive view of this Bill. Personally, I would rather associate myself with the very excellent speech of my hon. friend the Member for West Bradford and follow him in condemning both the principle and the provisions of the Bill now before the House. I think the task of the opponents of the Bill was very much facilitated, if I may say so without disrespect, by the somewhat flimsy and unsubstantial case made for it. This Bill, or a singularly cognate Bill, was debated very fully last year, but I wholly fail to observe any violent manifestation or desire on the part of consumers of beer in this country for that compound of ambrosial nectar with which he wishes to regale them with. Last year the title of the Bill contained the attractive word "pure," which might have been expected to attract many votaries, but it has been eliminated from the title of this Bill. What is the object of the Bill we are considering? It seeks to enact certain stringent restrictive measures as against the present method of manufacturing beer, and it proceeds to provide that not more than 15 per cent. of saccharine and similar substances may be used in the mash tun. I fail to observe the magic of 15 per cent. There is no doubt that the motive power of this Bill, as well as the Bill of last year, was the arsenical scare at Manchester; but if saccharine substances are all deleterious, if they are poisonous, and if they contain toxic elements of a murderous character, not alone should 15 per cent. not be allowed, but even their use to the extent of one per cent. ought to be prohibited. As an abstract proposition, the desire to safeguard the consumer of beer is very pretty; but I put it to the House whether this attempt to harass and interfere with the freedom of trade is at all likely to be of any real or tangible good to the consumer. I have yet to

learn that beer brewed from barley malt and hops is better or purer than beer brewed from sugar and other saccharine substances, since they are chemically indistinguishable. There is no doubt that the public demand nowadays is for some light beer which will drop bright quickly, and surely the promoters of this Bill know that it is only possible to produce such a beer by using a certain quantity of sugar. I am credibly informed that 95 per cent. of the brewers of this country use a certain proportion of sugar, and it is certain that sugar is not used for the sake of economy. I am perfectly able to prove—indeed, it is a matter of common knowledge—that sugar is dearer than barley malt and hops. It is used because it is absolutely indispensable to obtain a particular brew to suit the taste and requirements of the public.

The hon. Member for Preston used what he doubtless considered a clinching argument when he said that one of the avowed objects of the Bill was to stimulate and encourage the growth of English barley. My right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division has also used that argument. If I thought it were at all likely that that excellent object would be brought about by the passage of this Bill, I should not hesitate to vote for it. But will it? I maintain that that object would be defeated if this Bill is passed, because it would mean a very large reduction in the consumption of British barley in the manufacture of beer, for the reason that sugar and hop substitutes are now used by brewers in order to counteract and neutralize and reduce the very heavy albuminous properties unfortunately inseparable from lower grades of British barley. Therefore the inevitable consequence of the passage of this Bill would be that it would not only lessen the consumption of British barley, but would very largely stimulate and open a fresh field for foreign barley. I had the advantage of consulting one of the greatest maltsters in Kent, and he assured me that the inevitable effect of this Bill would be to destroy the use of British barley in the manufacture of beer. He, being a brewer as well as a maltster, was able to take a comprehensive view of both standpoints, and speaking with great knowledge and authority, declared that not only would the use of British barley for the manufacture of beer be considerably curtailed, but also that heavy loss would be inflicted on the Exchequer, while it would confer no safeguard on the consuming public. I venture to think that the speech of the hon. Member for Preston conveyed neither illumination nor conviction to those who had an open and unprejudiced mind on the matter, and also that the time of the House might be more favourably occupied even on a Wednesday afternoon than in discussing a Bill which I hope the House will reject by such an overwhelming majority as will give it its quietus for many years to come.

(3.14.) MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): The Bill which we are now discussing is unquestionably a better Bill than that of last year, and I think that that in itself will be some justification for the House not adopting this measure and passing it into law. In all probability, if the House rejects this Bill, the promoters will come to Parliament next year with a better Bill still. I am anxious not to give a silent vote on this occasion. It seems to me that the Bill is founded on what I may describe as a fallacy and a misconception. The promoters are, as far as I can judge, of opinion that beer brewed from barley malt and hops is the very best possible liquor that can be consumed by the British public. I entirely dissent. What is generally consumed in the North of England is what is called mild ale. Bitter beer is not consumed by the working classes to any extent in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and I venture to say that beer brewed from malt and hops alone would be greatly inferior to beer brewed with an adequate proportion of sugar. An addition of 25 per cent. of good sugar makes the best possible beer that can be brewed for the people of this country. I agree with my hon. friend who has just spoken that sugar is not used for the sake of cheapness, but because it produces a better liquor. Hon. Members are entirely wrong in thinking that the nearer the standpoint of having nothing but barley malt and hops is approached, the better the beer. The beer brewed from sugar cannot be detected by analysis. It is absolutely the same article, when placed before the public,

as beer brewed from barley malt and hops, the only difference being that it is more palatable and a better liquor. What hon. Members are endeavouring to do is to oblige brewers to place before the public an inferior article; and they are doing that in order to increase the demand for a certain commodity which many of them provide, and which they think ought to be more largely consumed. I maintain that is not a fair thing to do, and that it is not a straightforward way of dealing with this matter. It practically amounts to Protection. If hon. Members can prove that beer brewed from barley malt and hops is the best, then all our arguments go by the board; but if it can be shown that beer brewed with an admixture of sugar is a better liquor, then there is nothing in this Bill. I would further wish to point out that if this Bill is passed into law it will disorganise the arrangements of every brewery in the three Kingdoms. The brewers will have to increase their plant very largely, because everyone knows that beer brewed from sugar fines much more rapidly than other beer, and, therefore, the brewer need not keep a very large stock. I venture to suggest to hon. Members whose names are on the back of this Bill that they are altogether wrong in their way of dealing with this matter. I agree with the hon. Baronet that if a man wants beer composed of malt and hops he has a perfect right to go into any public house in the country and demand it. I suggested to the hon. Baronet last year that he was creating a statutory liquor. There is no reason why it should not be distinctly understood that if a man desires malt beer alone he should be able to obtain it, and that every publican should be compelled to keep it; and if the hon. Baronet would only introduce such a measure, I would most heartily support him. Protection is at the bottom of this Bill, and I hope the House will reject it by a large majority, which will probably have the effect of a much better Bill being introduced next year.

*(3.20.) MR. PURVIS (Peterborough): As I was responsible for the Bill of last year, the House may not consider it unfitting that I should say a few words on the present proposal. This Bill is the same, and not the same, as the Bill of last year. Last year's Bill said that what was made from barley should be called beer; this Bill says that what is called beer shall be made from barley, a grain which is the main constituent of beer in substance as it is wholly in name. Indeed, barley is still called beer in the Northern part of this island. This perfectly simple proposal is founded on the common sense truth that the best way to seem to be a thing is to be that thing in reality. But this Bill is alleged to be guilty, among other enormities, of interfering with the free mash tun, as if to do so, were, so to speak, to lay sacrilegious hands on the very Ark of the Covenant. By the Act of 1880, by which the malt tax was converted into the beer duty, the tax was removed to a later stage in the process of brewing, thereby giving the brewer a wider choice of substances for his purpose as regards his duty to the revenue, but not a wider choice of conduct as regards his duty to his customer. For aught I know that Act might give him the right to brew from shirt collars and sawdust, but not the right to say expressly or impliedly that the product was brewed from barley. Moreover, if the Act of 1880 gave such a right it was not sacred. If the public benefit requires that the Act of 1880 should be altered or abolished then this ought to be done. Beer is brought into existence for the sake of the public, and the public has not been brought into existence for the sake of beer. These Beer Bills are always charged with obstructing the march of science. But, Sir, we are not hampering the march of science, but the abuse of science. Her votaries in trade must not seek their reward in a way not yet recognised in the British commercial code of morality by selling an imitation under the cloak of an idea that it is the genuine article when, in point of fact, it is not the genuine article. It is idle to say one is as good as the other, the buyer has a right to have what he asks for and what he pays for. The high priests of science the chemists say that malt beer and substitute beer are indistinguishable. That is one of those half-truths which are far more deceptive than complete untruths. Indistinguishable may be true of certain properties which the two kinds of beer possess in common with each other and various other

things, but it is not true with regard to certain peculiar properties which differentiate substitute beer from the rest of beers. It is true they are the same as far as concerns starch, sugar, and alcohol, but it is untrue as regards the peculiarities of barley malt made antecedently in nature's laboratory which give it valuable, nutritious and strengthening properties, distinguishing barley malt from chemical imitations.

Then the Bill is charged with infringing the doctrine of Free Trade. It would be interesting to know how many fallacies have masqueraded under the garb of that much misunderstood and much belied theory. The touchstone and test of Free Trade is the interest of the consumer and not the interest of the producer as such. The consumer must have the last word in every article and the casting vote in every decision. That is the cardinal principle upon which the present Bill turns. It will be a great boon to the consumer, for even as regards the lighter beers it has been admitted today that there is a growing opinion that none are equal to those Bavarian beers which are made exclusively from malt and hops, and which it is a criminal Act not to make exclusively from malt and hops. English beer of the same kind will always be cheaper and will gain greater popularity than imported beer. This Bill will also be a benefit to agriculturists. I never could quite make out why some agriculturists have doubted this statement. I remember the criticisms poured upon my Bill last year, and the vaticinations which have been repeated this afternoon about the threatened inroad of French barley, as if a good sample of English barley would not be able to hold its own in the English market. I cannot but suspect that since farmers made their great mistake in getting the repeal of the malt tax, reasonable self-distrust has in some cases developed into unreasonable fear of their own shadows.

As regards the friendly critics who fancy that this Bill does not go far enough in the way of protecting English barley, their arguments, drawn from interested premises, are double-edged and likely to alienate, not conciliate, public support of this Bill. Each of us whose names are on the back of this measure may well breathe the aspiration of the Psalmist—

"Let the righteous chasten me friendly and reprove me, but let not their precious balms break my head."

And last but not least, in my opinion, after much study of the subject, I think it will be no small advantage to the brewer himself. The liking for English beer will revive when public confidence in the composition of English beer has been restored. With all due respect for the hon. Member for West Bradford, I think the brewer will be less worried about Excise requirements and will be less wearied with making declarations about cunningly devised but perfidious and even fatal materials. He will not be continually distracting his mind from legitimate brewing and devoting his attention to puzzling substitutes, but like the successful Bavarian brewer he will be occupied with the study of genuine improvement in the preparation of malt, the boiling process and fermentation, and his reward will be as great as that of his successful competitor, the Bavarian brewer. I hope that the House will pass the Second Reading of this Bill with even a more triumphant majority than that which crowned our efforts upon a like occasion last year.

*(3.35.) MR. MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston): The carefully prepared speech of the last speaker would have been one of the most comic speeches which I have ever heard in this House if I had not felt that it had been made upon a question of stopping that advance of industrial science of which England above all other nations sought to be proud. On such a subject I am surprised that a speech of this sort should be delivered by a Member of this House.

There is no question as to the aim of this Bill. It is to render criminal the processes by which I should think certainly one-third, and probably one-half of the beer now made in England is manufactured. There was one admission which the last speaker made which I hope the House will bear in mind, and that is that upon this question the last word is with the consumer. The consumer has pronounced on these new beers versus the old beers, and there is no doubt as to what his verdict has been I want just for

a few minutes to call the attention of the House to what the real question is. I want to show how this measure affects the consumer and how it affects the producer, because in my conversations on the subject I have found a great earnestness and a great desire to go right on this question, but I have also found the profoundest ignorance as to what the question at issue was. That is not to be wondered at. This is an instance of what those hon. Members who take an interest in industrial advance will find occuring again and again. When an industrial art passes to a science, when peeple develop it in such a way that it is out of sight of the old-fashioned tentative methods that knew not the reason why they did a thing, then the further it advances and the further it gets away from the common notions of the art the more open the people who cultivate it are to attacks by the interested based upon some misrepresentation of what they are doing. They are open to these attacks in a greater degree because the audience appealed to must necessarily be ignorant of the special work which has taken this industrial science out of the sight of the common people. The assailants with the exereise of a little skill can always misrepresent an advance, and as it were, rouse prejudice against it, and they can do this with safety, simply because the people to whom they speak, having their own business to see to, cannot keep themselves abreast of that special knowledge which alone can appreciate the advance which has been made.

Take the case of the Bessemer process. That process has added countless wealth to England by making it possible to get the best iron from our native iron ore deposits. Supposing a man argued today that because our forefathers were in the habit of taking a good iron ore and never meddled with an ore containing phosphorus in order to make good iron that we should always do the same. The merit of the Bessemer process is that it makes good iron out of bad ore, and just in the same way in every one of our industrial pursuits the more we advance the more we are able to turn to good account that which the comparative ignorance of our forefathers failed to utilise. Therefore you will often find attacks made on those industries which have made the most advance simply because the people cannot understand the advances which have been made, because they have gone beyond them. No better case can be given than this case of brewing. I do not pretend to be a practical brewer, but I do know that scientists have now turned brewing from a rule of thumb trade into one of the most beautiful processes in industrial science. The various steps by which this has been done are, of course, known only to brewing specialists, but it happens that I have some knowledge of them because almost every one of them has come under my notice, for I have had to master them all in connection with some invention or other. I want to give to this House some idea how, chiefly through the work of Englishmen, this science has grown, and I want to point out how these things which have been spoken of as a kind of crude adulteration, which spoil the perfection of our forefathers' beer are all of them advances made for the sake of purity, cheapness, efficiency and quickness in the production of beer.

The critical moment in the history of beer was when lager beer first began to be largely imported into England. Up to that time you had only the old English beer. The great bulk of the old English beer would not be drunk now-a-days. It was strong in alcohol, and so heavily narcotized with hops that it was well known to the medical men that the symptoms of drunkenness partook more of the character of narcotic poisoning than of alcoholic stimulation. It was thick and more or less acid. When the lager beer came it was found to be light and lightly hopped, not narcotized. It was much appreciated by the English people, and I have no hesitation in saying that a large portion of the brewing trade would have passed into German hands, but for the labour of those English investigators who had mastered the chemistry of this delicate process of fermentation, and thus had placed in the hands of English brewers the weapons by which we could drive the foreigners out by beating them in the beer we ourselves produced. What was the nature of those investigations? Consider for a moment what is the nature of investigations in industrial seience. You perform an operation which produces a certain effect. You investigate it, in

order to find out how it came to produce that effect. The investigator thus finds out the cause, and as soon as he has isolated the cause that gives him some freedom. He now knows that if he keeps that cause unchanged he will get the same result, in spite of his changing the other circumstances. In that way he gets more and more freedom from old restrictions; he gradually gets more and more command of his material until he can work with certainty where before he worked merely tentatively. I will take a single instance—one that shows powerfully the mischievous nature of this Bill, and the absurdity of the excuses for it to which we have just listened. It was found out ages ago that malt would make beer, because the starch in malt put into water would turn into sugar. But it required somebody to find the cause. Then it was found that in sprouting a little ferment was generated that turned the starch into sugar. The purpose of this is evident. The starch is the food of the young plant, and can only be absorbed when soluble as sugar. Then they began to find out how much of this ferment there was in the malt, and to their surprise they found that the amount of ferment was far more than enough to turn the starch of that grain of malt into sugar. Naturally, when we think of it, it must be so, because in a downpour of rain, and in exposure to the weather, much must be lost in the plant, and there must be a large surplus provided by nature. It then occurred to them—the sole object of malting being to get this ferment which turns the starch into sugar—"If we have more ferment than we want, why should we malt so much?" That idea has been followed and worked out, and now we know that you need malt only half your barley, that with the proper appliances and the proper processes, the proper manipulation, that is to say, of temperatures, you may use half your barley unmalted, because the malted part is quite sufficient to take double its bulk and turn it into the sugar from which you make beer. Is not that a very beautiful idea? But it is made criminal by this Bill to use that idea.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): No.

*MR. MOULTON: I thought I should hear that from my hon. and learned friend the Member for the Rugby Division, whose position on the back of this Bill has been a standing wonder to me since the Bill was printed. If he will look at the Bill, he will find that only 15 per cent. of the sugar-forming materials may be unmalted barley, but I say you can do it up to 50 per cent. It follows, therefore, that this Bill forces you to use malted barley when you can use it as well as unmalted. Why? To keep the maltster going, I suppose. That is to say, scientific discovery is not to be allowed to have its natural reward in this direction; and, although that malting is absolute waste, although it produces no effect, because you can get exactly the same sugar from exactly the same starch by exactly the same ferment as by malting, yet by this Bill you are to be made a criminal and fined £500 if you dare to dispense with it.

MR. CORRIE GRANT: Not a criminal.

*MR. MOULTON: Not a criminal? I do not know what my learned friend thinks, but a person who disobeys the law of his country and is fined £500 is a very good pocket edition of a criminal, I think. I have given this illustration because in the speeches to which we have listened, these malt substitutes, as they are termed, have been treated as though they were unwholesome matters which wicked adulterators had been putting in the place of this beautiful product of nature—malt. But in this case the substitute is a pure natural product. Art has had a little to do with making malt, but art has nothing to do with making barley meal, and yet it is to be criminal to use barley meal when you can do so. I chose that instance because I desired to show how this Bill, which practically says to the industrial science of brewing, "You shall stand still," is based on complete ignorance of the facts of the case. Do you think that many of the Members whose names are on the back of the Bill would have said, "I am going to force a man to

use malted barley, although it is exactly the same whether he uses it malted or unmalted?" They are men of such intelligence and position that I am perfectly certain they would not lend their hand to such a proposal. But that is what I say—this science has grown out of common knowledge, and they do not know enough of this special science. It is not their business to know it. A man who perpetually runs after every science and tries to master it will be a jack of all trades and master of none. It is no reproach to a man that he does not understand the science of fermentation; but it is a reproach to him if, not knowing the subject, he attempts to restrict the free action of those who have to carry on industrial pursuits.

But I pass from that to another development of the science of fermentation which has led to this modern beer. It was not so much the use of unmalted grain which saved England from the intrusion of foreign beer; it was the use of what are known as brewing sugars. The greater part of English barley is unsuited for our light beers, and for a very simple reason. Barley is composed very largely of starch, which becomes the sugar out of which you make your alcohol, but there is a large amount of nitrogenous—call it albuminous—matter besides, and, according as you grow it in the fierce heat of a more tropical sun or in a damper climate, the proportions of the two elements are altered. The greater part of the English barley is so heavy in its albuminous portions as compared with its starch that it is exceedingly difficult to get from it beer of anything like the quality which is now insisted on. I know there are a great many brewers who use only malt and hops. How do they do it? They buy not only the very best English barley and hops, but they buy also very largely foreign barley to enable them to accomplish their object. When the struggle between German and English beer came, there were two courses open. The public would have the light beer. One course was to abandon the heavy English barleys, and to brew from light foreign barley. The other was to strengthen the English barleys in that portion in which they were weak—that is, the starch or sugar-forming portion. Now it fortunately happened that before this time it had been discovered that it was not only by malting that starch could be turned into sugar, but that it could also be done by an acid which could be removed, and that the sugars into which the starch was turned by the acid were exactly the same as were made by the little ferment in malt. Thence came the way of rescuing English barleys without going to the foreign barleys, and it was this: they took the starch from the grain, and, by means of the acid, turned it into these sugars, and these, when added to the English malt, restored the proportions necessary for the light beers.

What is the consequence of that? It is that, without having to apply to foreign malt, English malt has always found a good market, and is brewed into the clear light beer of today by the use of these things which are stigmatised as substitutes, but which really are sugars, made from the same source as the sugar in malt, but made in a laboratory instead of by fermentation. The real enemy of English malt is foreign malt, and the real friend of English malt was that sugar which enabled you to put English malt in the same position as its more starchy rival, and rendered it fitted for that kind of beer which is preferred by the people, and from which I hope you will not be able to drive them. These things are stigmatised as substitutes. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill said that it was of great national importance that beer should be brewed from wholesome materials. I should like to know where, in wholesomeness, there is any difference between these sugars and the sugars in malt. They are chemically identical. They are both produced from starch, one by one method, the other by another, neither method leaving any trace in the starch, except its conversion into sugar, and, if you choose to arrange it properly, neither leaving any trace in the sugar. In what sense, then, ought you to stigmatise these as substitutes? They are substitutes just in the same way as mutton is a substitute for beef; that is, you do not have them both for the same dinner, and the one makes the

other unnecessary. But in wholesomeness, in the way in which they brew a pure and good beer, there is nothing to choose between them, except this: that where you bring in the sugar that you get from starch you do not increase your trouble with the albuminous matter; whereas, when you are dealing with malt, you cannot get the sugar without the concomitant of albuminous matter. A certain amount of that albuminous matter is good, or, at all events, it gives a flavour, that is appreciated, and that amount must always be there; but why it should be more wholesome to increase the amount of the substance that you do your best to get rid of, I do not see.

The case, therefore, stands thus. No step here has been a step in adulteration. It has been a true scientific step, based on understanding what you are doing, seeing how you can do it better, more quickly, and sometimes more cheaply. With regard to cheapness, I am not, as I have said before, a practical brewer, but I know something of the chemistry of brewing, and I can assure hon. Members that there are hundreds of brewers using sugar at this present moment, when it would be cheaper for them to use malt. I will tell you why they do it. First of all, because it gives so much greater accuracy to their brewing. Perhaps the House will follow me for a moment, while I explain this point, though it is somewhat difficult. In these sugars, both in the sugar of malt and in the sugars obtained otherwise, there are more than one sugar, so closely allied as to be difficult to separate, but still not quite identical, differing mainly in the speed with which they take up fermentation. Consequently, coming to the real question of practical brewing, in order to get a good beer, it will be appreciated that you have not only to think of the fermentation by which the alcohol in the first instance is made, but you want your beer to be in condition at the time it is drunk; you want the carbonic acid to be there to make it fresh, foaming, and attractive. For that purpose you must have a certain amount of sugars which more slowly ferment. You do not want them to ferment and have done with it; you want the fermentation to go on, so that right to the end the beer will be fresh and sparkling. Now, when you come to the sugars, you can analyse them, and so apportion the amount of the one and the amount of the other as to regulate the time at which the beer will be in condition. They are all equally wholesome; they are all equally nutritious if you take them as sugars; but, by reason of the fact that some outrun others in the speed of fermentation, you are able to graduate that speed so as to get a beer which shall be in condition at the time it is to be used. These are refinements which nobody ever dreamt of until the science of fermentation had made these advances, and now science gives to the brewers, not only cheapness, quickness, and better quality, but also that which always accompanies the growth of science—greater certainty. They have become musicians who can play on the keys of the instrument and produce the result they want. Do you mean to tell me that it is a good deed to send us back from this state into the ignorance of the past, or that any people here are in a position to say, "You have got on so far; you have saved us from German beer coming in; you have given us a beer of which the whole nation approves, but you shall stop now. You shall not go on adding to your triumphs; you shall not even use freely those triumphs you have already achieved?" Will anyone here say that we in this House are in a position to state in regard to one, I am sorry to say, of the biggest industries of England that it is not in any way to grow? Why, it brings to one's mind those two lines of Shakespeare where he refers to limits sought to be imposed even in his day—

> And art made tongue-tied by authority,
> And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill.

Now I hope I have placed before you the defence, or rather it is not a defence, but simply the history of this industry. I could point to very many things in addition, but I just want to appeal to hon. Members to consider two things. The first thing I want to put to them is this. Just consider the injury you are doing to the development of England if you put forward that it is the function of Parliament to step in and stop the development of an industry. Why! half the people whose names are on the back of this Bill go about preaching that larger sums ought to be given to secondary education, and that we are

being passed by other nations because we are not ready to take up the new inventions of science and put them into practice. But here they come and ask you to say, when an industry has gone on successfully, that there is to be no further advance in the future. You must not even use what you have been using. When a manufacturer is considering whether he shall take up a new process and instal new plant, the question comes before him as to whether he will be harried in so doing. If this Bill were passed, you would double the trouble which inventors find in getting manufacturers to take up their inventions. You would put in the way of inventors, on whom the prosperity of this country so largely depends, a most terrible stumbling block, if it is always to be thrown in their teeth that the proposed advance will be adjudicated upon by those who have no knowledge of the subject.

And now for my last point. In the debates on Procedure there have been references to the way in which private Members' legislation has fallen into desuetude, and all sorts of reasons have been given. May I suggest that one reason for the falling away of private Members' debates is the irresponsibility of the proposals. There have been four attempts from the same quarter to pass a Beer Bill, and they are all framed on different lines. The first two aimed at monopolizing the name "beer" for the product of malt and hops alone. Last year's Bill abandoned this idea and allowed brewers to use what they liked, provided they said what they were doing. This year's Bill prevented them from using what they liked, but they need not say anything about it. The present Bill was printed, I think, the day before the Easter holidays, and it came as a perfect surprise, because everyone who had spoken in favour of the previous Bill pointed out, as a great merit, that it left people perfectly free, and that it would not interfere with the freedom of trade at all. But just before the Easter holidays out came this Bill, which says, "Oh! you are not, under the penalties of this Bill, to do so-and-so." Just think of asking the House of Commons to pass a Bill of this kind without one word of external evidence or inquiry! A non-technical body like this House is asked to pass a measure affecting an immense industry! If that is not irresponsible legislation, I cannot think what it is. Suppose that the Government had intended to legislate on this subject: it must have begun years before. It must have ascertained by inquiry all the facts bearing on the proposal before introducing such drastic legislation. It would have had to find out whether there was a considerable body of public opinion supporting it before it dared to interfere in this way with a great industry. I cannot think of a parallel case in which a Government has dared to do such a thing; but here, as if it were a kind of casual occupation for a Wednesday afternoon, after learning the nature of the proposal two or three weeks ago, we are asked to commit the unutterable absurdity of interfering in this way with a great industry.

*(4.8.) SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I do not think that many in the House will envy me in having to reply to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I have listened to it with admiration, and can well appreciate the wisdom of the brewers in selecting the hon. and learned Gentleman for their advocate to get them out of the extremely difficult position in which they were placed by the use of substitutes at Manchester.

*MR. MOULTON: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I was not selected as their advocate at all. I was Chairman of a Commission consisting of some of the best scientific men, and I thought it a very great honour so to be.

*SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER: I beg my hon. friend's pardon if I have made a mistake. I fancy that I read in the papers that the Commission was addressed by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and that his remarks made a great impression. I want the practical men of the House to come down from the heights of Olympus to solid ground, and ask themselves the simple question, whether they would do to others as they would like to be done by in this matter. All the speeches I have heard against the Bill, except the last, reminded me of those I have heard over and over again. They all had the

me ring, and evidently were inspired om the same source; and if the actors e different, there is the same machinery hind the stage. The best performer as been kept to the last. I admit that e hon. and learned Gentleman has ade a great sensation, but the House Commons fortunately is not one of those aces which will allow itself to be carried way, even by the greatest eloquence, hen it emanates from a Gentleman who is known to have been ecently, whether professionally or not, ery much identified with the makers nd users of substitutes. I would say to he hon. Gentleman that I would e quite prepared to go down to auncestonwith him, and on a public platorm there ask his constituents whether, hen they go into a public-house and sk for a glass of beer, they want to now that they will get what they sk for.

Now, I would ask the hon. Gentleman this—if the argument in avour of beer made with substitutes is ound, why do the large majority of rewers not use any substitutes at all? Is that majority so ignorant that they lecline to avail themselves of these wonderful substitutes? The hon. Member has made fun of the Pure Beer Bill, but he could not impugn the honesty of the intentions of those who are responsible for it. Of course, I and the other promoters may be stupid. We feel that we are. We represent agricultural constituencies, it is true; but we are elected by people because we know something about the interests of these people. The hon. Member held us up not only as ignorant, but as people who had taken no pains to inform ourselves. To that I would say that for sixteen years I and my friends have been honestly endeavouring to settle this matter. In the course of the controversy we have been contradicted in a quotation from Herodotus by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, whom I am sorry not to see present, and the remarks I had prepared concerning him I will be obliged to forego. I have been to Egypt to see whether the right hon. Gentleman or myself was right, and I found from an examination of various inscriptions that it has been conclusively established that beer was made from barley, not merely 2,000 but nearly 5,000 years ago. I believe it was Herodotus whose veracity the right hon. Gentleman took exception to, and whom he called by a name which certainly, if used in regard to an hon. Member, would have caused the intervention of Mr. Speaker. I have with me here a certain number of inscriptions, which go to prove that beer was made from barley not only 2,000 years ago, but nearly 5,000 years ago. Of course, I know that scientific hon. Members will say that it would be difficult to prove the exact constituents of beer at that time, but, after all, there were great scientific authorities in those days. There is nothing new under the sun, and we must call in the old world to redress the balance of the new. It is quite clear that beer has been made from barley for many thousand years, but it is equally clear that if we go on as we are going, beer will not be made from barley much longer.

I should like to quote some figures to show the increased use of substitutes in brewing. In 1856 the quantity of sugar and other substitutes used was 1,790,000 lbs., in 1876 it was 98,144,000 lbs., and in 1901 it was 475,617,000 lbs. To put the matter in another way, the percentage of substitutes to barley malt has increased in the case of Scotch brewers from 3·36 per cent. in 1886 to 20 per cent. in 1900—very clever people the Scotch—in the case of English brewers from 11 per cent. in 1886 to 35 per cent. in 1900; whereas in the case of Irish brewers the percentage in the same period fell from 2.49 per cent. to 1.8 per cent. That is a great honour to Ireland, and in that respect, at all events, Ireland stands at the head of the United Kingdom. Yet there is a great deal of money made out of brewing even in Ireland. Ireland may be backward and ill-informed, but yet, as regards the purity of its beer, it is far ahead of either England or Scotland. The difficulty of putting the Bill into operation has been very much exaggerated. We are advised—and we have taken the best possible advice in the matter—that an Excise officer would even now be able to determine, within very narrow limits, whether more than 15 per cent. of materials other than barley malt and hops were being used. At any rate, the test would be sufficient to give an indication as to

whether the prescribed percentage of barley was being used. It is said that, if the Bill were passed, it would impose an additional duty on Excise officers. I do not believe that they would shrink from it in the public interest, but it must not be forgotten that since Mr. Gladstone brought about his change, the number of brewers has fallen to less than one third and, therefore, the task of inspection would not be nearly so great as it would have been in Mr. Gladstone's time.

I should like to say a few words as to the character of the opposition. We all recollect that during the last fifteen or sixteen years Beer Bills and Pure Beer Bills have been introduced on every possible occasion. As regards many of these Bills, we had to meet with very formidable opposition. There was Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, the Member for Wimbledon, a very bad man to have opposed to one; there was Mr. Samuel Whitbread, Mr. Money Wigram, and Mr. Edward Greene. There were giants in those days; but whom have we to meet now? We have to meet Gentlemen inspired by the manufacturers of substitutes, and by the brewers who use these substitutes. I should like the brewers themselves to stand up in this House and give us an opportunity of answering their arguments. In the old days, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth was their doughty champion; but, as he is not present today, I will postpone my remarks with reference to him.

It is impossible in the limits of a Wednesday afternoon debate to do justice to all the details of this complex question. The hon. and learned Member for Launceston said that the components of beer cannot be ascertained by analysis. A little reflection will enable us to analyse the speech of the hon. and learned Member, and when we have analysed it we will find that it is a most eloquent defence of the advance of science as a whole, and an extremely valuable help to the interests with which the hon. and learned Member is connected.

*MR. MOULTON: Is it right, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that I am connected with interests with which I have absolutely nothing to do? I speak my opinions in this House from a very deep feeling on the subject of industrial art, and I have got no interest whatever, either directly or indirectly, with the brewing trade. I should act in precisely the same way if the tanning trade or any other industry were attacked in this House.

*SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER: I am very sorry to have imputed to the hon. and learned Member any connection with the brewing trade; but I should like to ask the hon. and learned Member if it is not a fact that he did appear at Manchester on behalf of the brewers and the substitute makers. However, I will not pursue the matter further. All I would urge on the House is to look behind the speech of the hon. and learned Member, and see if it really attacks the principle which the promoters of the Bill have in view, namely, the establishment of a standard for beer in order that the national drink should have some considerable percentage of what Englishmen believe it to be brewed from. In altering the Bill, we have no doubt laid ourselves open to the charge of inconsistency, but we have altered it with an honest desire to meet the advance of science, and in accordance with the opinion expressed by brewing scientists in this House that a limited quantity of other substances is necessary for the purpose of brewing good beer from certain classes of barley.

*(4.32.) SIR MICHAEL FOSTER (London University): My name has been referred to in this debate, and I rise under a certain sense of difficulty. In the first place, it would give me very great pleasure if I had been able to support, or at all events not to oppose, a Bill supported by my hon. friend who has just sat down; and secondly, I feel that I bear the badge of science. I gather that science in this debate has been somewhat under suspicion. I have heard allusions which came very near references to sleight of hand; and, at all events, there is, I think, a feeling, bursting on expression, that science is not practical. I venture to trust that the little I have to say on this matter will have a practical bearing, and I may certainly say that

anything I have to offer will not be in the interest of mere science, but in the interest both of the consumer and the maker—in the interest, in fact, of all. I venture to think that the hon. Member has no right to speak of this Bill as affording a standard for beer. It affords a standard for the materials of beer, but does not afford a standard for beer itself, and as such a required standard, I venture to think that it falls short, because with the same materials, but with various treatment, you may make on the one hand good beer, and on the other hand bad beer. What we have to ask is whether the process which this Bill strives to stop has resulted in the production of bad beer. I venture to say it has not, and that the beer which is produced by the methods against which this measure is directed is good beer, and is not only indistinguishable from beer made from barley malt only, but might be, and often is, better.

We have to deal in this matter mainly with the so-called light beer—the mild, light, bright beer which the hon. and learned Member for Launceston states has come so much into use. In brewing you have to deal in the malt with two things, the nitrogenous portion of the malt and the starchy portion; and the essence of successful brewing consists in maintaining a balance and due proportion between these two great constituents. That is so, not only because, as has been roughly stated, the nitrogenous matters give the flavouring and the starch gives the alcohol, but because in this excessively complex process by which the malt is converted into beer the steps of the process depend on this relation, and if you have not a proper quantity of nitrogenous substances in relation to starchy substances, you get a variety of secondary products, which make the beer bad. There can be no doubt that in ordinary English-grown barley the relation of the nitrogenous substances to the starchy substances is not the proper relation that makes really good light ale. That is the fundamental fact of the whole business. In this English-grown barley the relation of the nitrogenous substances to the starchy substances is such that you cannot make beer out of it without adding something to it. You cannot use it alone in order to produce the light bright beer that is in demand. Now, there is a considerable quantity of foreign barley which differs in constitution in many ways from our English barley; it contains more starch. You can use this to supply the lack of starch in English barley. If you do not, you must use sugar or saccharine material. That is the whole business. In order to properly utilise commonplace English barley, you must treat it in some way in order to add to it increased saccharine yielding materials. You must add more than 15 per cent. That is the evidence of the most skilful brewers, and therefore, if this Bill becomes law, it will prevent the manufacture of good light beer from English barley, unless brewers have recourse to foreign barley.

*(4.42.) MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): Surely the question of whether 10, or 15, or 20 per cent. of substitutes should be the maximum employed is a question of detail which might be left to the Committee stage of the Bill, and the mere fact that an hon. Member does not agree with the particular percentage laid down in the Bill is no reason why he should refrain from supporting the Second Reading, or should take the step of voting against it. I hope the House will not be carried away by the flood of eloquence with which we have been overwhelmed by the hon. and learned Member for the Launceston Division of Cornwall, whose contribution to the debate was an extremely valuable one. The argument of my hon. and learned friend would apply to every trade or industry, but when he went on to endeavour to prove that the Bill would interfere with the whole progress of research and check the progress of industry, it was going beyond what was even in his capacity to prove. No one will dispute that those who are engaged in scientific research should have full liberty to make all the inventions they can for the purpose of cheapening the price of beverages, but why should they apply that process to a beverage which has come to have a recognised and well-defined meaning? That inventive genius can still be applied, if this Bill passes, to other

beverages, called by other names. What is objected to is that by the use of certain drugs and ingredients, some of which are innocuous, and some deleterious, a beverage should be concocted and sold under the name of "beer," which for very many centuries has been understood to be a particular concoction of malt and hops. To meet objections raised by the hon. Member and other opponents of the measure on previous occasions a certain compromise has been arrived at, to the effect that a certain proportion of substitutes should be admitted—15 per cent. of the whole. Now it seems to me, especially after what has fallen from hon. Gentlemen in this debate, that a concession of this kind ought to be accepted in the spirit in which it is made. It ought to be welcomed, and every opportunity should be given for this question to be threshed out in the Committee stage of the Bill. But for the House to be carried away by the flow of eloquence which, as I have said, came from my hon. and learned friend the Member for Launceston, would be, to my mind, a great misfortune. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in the course of his speech, quoted Shakespeare; and his speech reminds me of the words in which Touchstone addressed Agricultural William—

"I will deal in poison with thee, or in bastinado, or in steel. I will bandy with thee in faction. I will o'errun thee with policy. I will kill thee 150 ways, therefore tremble and depart."

And so the hon. and learned Gentleman, by means of his well-trained and scientific observation, says to the Agricultural Williams of this Bill, and bids them to tremble and depart. So far as I am concerned, his speech will not have such deterrent effect upon me, nor will it have on any of those who intend to support the Bill, seeing that these matters of detail may be thoroughly threshed out at a subsequent stage of the Bill.

(4.48.) MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): When I saw the condition of the Benches on both sides of the House and the utter lack of interest apparently taken in this debate at an earlier hour of this afternoon, I thought to myself that it was one of the results of the new Rules of Procedure, many of which have already been passed. Everybody knows that no Bill of this character when those Rules become operative can have even a 100 to 1 chance of making further progress or passing into law. It seems to me that this is a purely academic discussion, and there appears to be a great change in the interest which is taken in it as compared with the debates on a similar measure last year. It was only after the learned and eloquent speech of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston that the House began to wake up and take some interest in the subject, and I shall ask with some diffidence the House to allow me to follow some of the hon. and learned Member's argument as nearly as I can. I understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to say that science said that you need malt only half of your barley, that that malt properly treated will use so much sugar, and that the other half you can do without. He traced the developments in recent years to the use of sugar, and he showed by a process, which he described in great detail, how, apart entirely from malt, that sugar which is necessary according to him could be obtained, and he designates the attempt on the part of this Bill to limit the freedom of the use of that kind of material in the future, as an attempt to send us back to the depths of darkness and ignorance, and to interfere with and hinder the researches of science as far as possible. Sir, that is not what we want at all; what we want is to be allowed to go back to what has been proved by experience to be the path of safety. When we see this sugar made which the hon. and learned Gentleman describes with so much ability and enthusiasm, how do we find it is obtained? It is obtained in this way—and this is the proof of the fatal weakness which underlies the whole of the hon. and learned Member's argument—it is obtained by the use of acids, and it is precisely through those acids that the poison came into those beers which were so unhappily used to such an extent in the North of England, and caused that terrible epidemic which must be fresh in the minds of those who are now in this House. Now, I do not pretend for a moment to compete with the hon. and learned Member opposite or with the hon. Member below me in my knowledge of science, but I have done my best to learn something of the merits of this question, and I think I have put the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman fairly. He talks about going back

to the depths of ignorance on this subject. Are we to be told that the greatest brewers in the United Kingdom do not understand their business quite as well and perhaps rather better than the hon. and learned Member? Take Guinesses of Dublin; they use absolutely nothing but malt and hops; are they to be dubbed as ignorant and knowing nothing of their business? Take Messrs. Bass of England; they use in their brewery malt and hops entirely, with this single addition, that, after the beer is put into the barrels, it is true that they use 1½ per cent. of sugar, solely for the purpose of bringing on the last stage of fermentation in three days instead of three weeks, solely to make their beer at once saleable. I don't know whether any hon. Gentlemen here are in the habit of drinking Bass's beer, but I drink it whenever I dare, and it is impossible to drink anything better; it is brighter and lighter than anything else in the world. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about water?] What! Water! Oh, I cannot say. But I say it is impossible to find brighter and lighter beer, yet is it absolutely free from these adjuncts; yet, according to the hon. and learned Member, if we go back to using malt and hops we go back to the depths of ignorance. I cannot help thinking, as was said the other night, that the hon. and learned Gentleman, in his singularly able and instructive speech, has been able to prove a good deal too much.

But, passing from the scientific aspect, I would ask the House to regard the question from the agricultural point of view. It is customary nowadays in many quarters to say that agriculture has greatly improved, and that the depression has considerably lessened during the last few years. In some parts of the country it is probably true; indeed, I am pretty sure it is the case, but in the great corn-growing districts, such, for instance, as some parts of Norfolk and Lincolnshire, I doubt whether the farmers ever had a worse time than during the last two years. Wheat is no longer a profitable crop to grow; barley, to a large extent, has taken its place. But two bad barley crops, with correspondingly bad prices, have left many, even of the very best, men in those districts in positions of the greatest possible difficulty. The problem of how to keep the plough going and the people employed on the land is becoming every year, every month, every day, more difficult of solution. The Budget of my right hon. friend, too, however admirable it may be from a revenue point of view, will do little or nothing for these people. On the other hand, I hold the opinion that no measures have ever been proposed to Parliament, at any rate, within my recollection, which would have done more, or indeed as much, to help the agricultural interest, including the tenants and labourers as well as the landlords themselves, as would have been done, had they passed, by the Bills upon this subject which have been introduced during the last few years. The reason is very simple. The amount of sugar used in brewing in substitution of barley of late years has been, and I believe is still, enormous. If hon. Members would consult the Blue-books already in the Library, and also the evidence of the Royal Commission now sitting—if ever we get that evidence, it is two years old already—it will be found that 60 per cent. is sometimes used, while the use of 50 per cent. is by no means uncommon. If the use of these substitutes was limited to the extent suggested by this Bill, it would mean an enormous displacement of sugar which must be replaced by something else, and that something else must be barley. There would be, in consequence, an enormously increased demand for barley. The hon. Member for London University, following the example of many others, has, in reply to that, stated that foreign barley would be used. I am not prepared to make that wholesale and sweeping admission myself, but, assuming that it was foreign barley, it must be remembered that there is no illimitable supply of that commodity. Therefore, if there is an increased demand for foreign barley, up will go the price, and with the price of foreign barley increased, up will go the price of English barley also. It is not too much to expect that under the provisions contained in this Bill, or others of a similar character, the price of barley might be raised by from 5s. to 7s. a quarter all round. If that were so, what a revolution

it would be in the agricultural districts. You would hear no more of agricultural depression. No better means could possibly be devised of providing work for the population, and of putting a decided check on what is spoken of as the rural depopulation of the present day, which we all rightly deplore.

Remember, also, lest I might appear to be leaving out of sight the rights and advantages of the brewers, that the justification for making this proposal, which we defend and have defended, is that the use of sugar in beer-brewing —sugars treated as they were by these acids—was the cause of the poisonings which occurred not long ago in so many parts of the country, which led to so many deaths, and caused so much illness and suffering. If this Bill were passed, we should have taken a long step towards ensuring the use of pure and wholesome ingredients, free from any dangers of that kind, in the future. These being the facts of the case, since that outbreak I have always taken a deep interest in this movement, and have done my best in and out of Parliament to support it. I have always thought it was a golden opportunity of which any Government might have availed themselves for effecting a double purpose—that of safeguarding the health of the people, on the one hand, and, on the other, of aiding the greatest but, at the same time, most depressed interest in the whole of the country, viz., that of agriculture. At one time my hopes were very high. Last year a member of the Cabinet—I think it was the Postmaster General—made a speech, in which he said that in his opinion the passing of a Bill on the subject during last session had become inevitable. I then hoped most sincerely that the Government would deal with the matter themselves. It was actually rumoured at one time that there were proposals already formed. Whether that was the truth or not, I do not know; but at all events when Parliament met it was quite clear that the Government did not mean to be friendly on the subject. We private Members passed a Bill by a large majority, but we lost all chance of making any further progress with it entirely in consequence of the action of my right hon. friend the Leader of the House. In spite of all requests, he refused to grant facilities for the Bill to be referred to a Grand Committee until it was too late. Two months, during which the Grand Committees were doing absolutely nothing, were wasted, and my right hon. friend would not be induced to give us the opportunity of availing ourselves of their services. This year still more effectual means have been taken to prevent any real progress with either this or any other private Bill which is open to opposition, however large may be the majority in its favour, or whatever may be the merits of the Bill itself. Under the new Rules, any progress with those Bills after Whitsuntide will be an absolute impossibility. For my own part, since I have seen the general tendency of those Rules, and the way they have been treated, I heartily wish I had supported the Motion to refer them to a Select Committee.

The position of the Government appears to me to be this—they will not deal with the question themselves, and they take care that nobody else shall deal with it for them. I regret that attitude more than I can say. It is not in their own interests in the country; in fact, it is a great mistake. It is unwise to take a course so calculated to alienate many of those who, for many years, have been their best and strongest supporters. I quite recognise the difficulty of the subject. Nobody is more aware than I am that it can be dealt with only by great care, and that no alteration of the law on the subject should be made until the whole matter has been threshed out in Committee. But there are so many Members of the House possessing expert knowledge that I really do not think it would be a matter of very great difficulty. While that is my view, I earnestly hope there are still gentlemen enough left in this House who recognise the importance of this question to the industry to which I have referred, and who, at all events, will give their votes in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill.

*(5.8.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My right hon. friend has expressed himself as somewhat aggrieved by the action taken by the Leader of the House, in regard to the fate of the Bill introduced last year. I do not think that is a fair complaint. What was the Bill introduced last year? It was a Bill, as the hon. and learned Member opposite wittily said, for allowing the brewers to do what they liked, providing they told people what they did. This Bill, as he

also has observed, is one which is to prevent brewers from doing what they like, provided they say nothing about it. The two Bills are as totally different as any two Bills dealing with the same subject could very well be. Therefore, I fail to see on what grounds my right hon. friend can possibly find fault with the Leader of the House for not granting special facilities last year for the passing of a Bill which its own supporters have not ventured to re-introduce this session.

I do not wish to detain the House with regard to the principle of the Bill now before us. That has been amply debated by others. My object in rising is only to make a few observations with regard to the effect of the Bill upon the Exchequer, and upon the officials of the Inland Revenue. With regard to the effect on the Exchequer, my right hon. friend has said, as is perfectly clear, that the main object of this Bill is to reduce the quantity of sugar used in brewing. Well, last year, in imposing the sugar duty, I imposed it upon sugar used in brewing, so that as a matter of fact at the present time a brewer in using that material uses a more costly material than he did before. If the use of sugar in former years was cheaper, as compared with barley, malt, or other materials, certainly so far as that can be put an end to, it has been put an end to by the imposition of the duty on sugar. Yet the right hon. Member says that brewers continue to use sugar to an extent of which he disapproves. Why? Is that not some proof of the correctness of the argument in the admirable speech of the hon. and learned Member opposite. enforced by my hon. friend the Member for London University, in which both of those high authorities prove, I think, that the use of sugar is n many cases essential in order to produce that particular class of light beer which is such an enormous improvement on the beer we used to have? As to the extent to which the revenues might be affected by a reduction in the use of sugar, I cannot form an estimate, because the amount varies in different breweries; but that it would be considerable I have no doubt whatever. I wish, however, to dwell more upon the statement which was made by my hon. friend the Member for Sudbury and my hon. friend the Member for Gloucestershire, who have asserted that the enforcement of the Bill would be a simple matter, and that, without materially increasing the staff of the Excise, officers by gauging the mash-tun could check the proportion of articles used in the manufacture of beer. I have directed the authorities of Inland Revenue to examine the matter very carefully, for I do not wish to throw obstacles in the way of the Bill from this point of view, and those authorities have reported to me in a totally different sense. I do not think it will take me long, and I should like to read to the House the material points of this report. They state that—

"There would be very great practical difficulties in carrying out the proposal contained in the third section of this Bill. A check sufficient for revenue purposes is now exercised over the quantity of malt used in brewing by taking a gauge of the 'grains' which remain in the mash-tun after all the worts are drawn off; but owing to the fact that the brewers, in accordance with the law, enter the quantities of malt by weight, there is often a very wide discrepancy between the quantity of malt entered by the brewer and the quantity shown by a gauge of the residual grains in the mash-tun. Malt varies in weight from 32 lbs. to 44 lbs. per bushel, and assuming that a brewer used malt of the weight of 36 lbs. per bushel every bushel (that is every 42 lbs.) entered by the brewer would represent 1⅛ bushels by gauge or measure. The quantities found by gauging the residual grains may vary from 10 or 15 per cent. under to 20 per cent. over the quantity of malt entered by the brewer. But rough as the existing check is upon the quantity of malt it certainly becomes more inexact when flaked maize, rice, or other prepared starchy substances are used in addition to malt, for those substances pass mostly into solution from the mash-tun and leave but little residue. The gauges now obtained in the mash-tun would, therefore, give but very imperfect evidence as to the total quantity of 'barley malt' and malt adjuncts used in a brewery, and would certainly not afford any means by which the relative proportions in which barley, malt and other starchy or saccharine substances are used, could be even roughly estimated. The only way in which the quantities of barley malt and of malt adjuncts could be ascertained would be by weighing the materials before mashing. But in large breweries the malt is usually crushed in a mill-room, from which it is passed through a hopper into the mash-tun, and no attempt could possibly be made to weigh the malt shortly before brewing. All that an officer could really do would be to weigh before its removal to the mill-room a certain quantity of malt which the brewer stated he intended to use in brewing, but this would, of course, not be a check of any value, for the brewer might use more malt or other material than the officer had seen weighed. In order that any effective control could be exercised over the proportions in which malt and malt substitutes are used, it would be necessary that the brewers' operations should be carried on in the presence of an officer of the revenue, and this

would mean a large increase of the staff and in the cost of supervision. I see no steps of a reasonable, practicable character which can be taken under section five of the Bill to enforce the provisions of the Act should the Bill become law."

I think that is a conclusive answer to the views of the hon. Member.

MR. TOMLINSON: I stated that we should be willing to accept any further Amendment in that respect.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Here is a Bill which imposes a penalty of £500 for a breach of a certain mode of manufacturing beer, and the House is told that the working of the Bill will rest on the good faith of the persons who will be subject to the penalty. That is a most extraordinary method of legislation. I am prepared to admit that what I have said with regard to the loss of revenue, or with regard to the additional charge that might be thrown upon the Exchequer, is not a conclusive argument. If it be essential in the public interest that the manufacture of beer should be confined to the method proposed in this Bill, and it should be a penal offence to manufacture beer in any other way except as proposed in this Bill; of course, the Revenue must lose and the Inland Revenue staff must be increased. That is a matter for the House to decide, but I think that as an answer to this argument the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston is sufficient. For what public object is the House asked to say that beer shall always be made of barley malt, and other materials in the proportions suggested by the Bill? Is it for the public health?

My right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford trotted out again the argument from last year's debate, but if the brewer is allowed a margin of 15 or 20 per cent. beyond the barley malt, is there not a good deal of room for a good deal of injury to the public health? Where is the guarantee for purity as far as the public health is concerned? If it is merely the desire of hon. Members to perpetuate the beer they remember in their youth, beer mainly composed of malt and hops, I venture to say that it will be an interference with a most important industry, and detrimental to the State. The change from very heavy beer to the light beers now so generally used has been of enormous public advantage, and I should be sorry to see anything sanctioned by Parliament which would, as has been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for Launceston, interfere with the proper development of this industry. In what I have said I do not wish to lead the House to suppose that I am doing anything more than expressing my own individual opinions with regard to this Bill. Some of my colleagues in the Government held a different view; I speak for myself alone; but I am bound to look at the Bill from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in that position I trust that the House will not give it a Second Reading.

(5.25.) MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I wish to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the manner in which he has demolished the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. I did not envy the hon. Baronet the Member for Sudbury when he had to answer the magnificent speech made by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Launceston. I would also like the hon. Baronet to know that, at all events in the opinion of many hon. Members in this House, innuendoes and not arguments are in no way calculated to add to the popularity of his Bill or to the likelihood of it becoming law. The hon. Baronet held out his little sop to Ireland, and he spoke of the great purity of the beer made in Ireland. I wish to say, however, that I think the hon. Baronet and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford have fallen into a great fallacy in regard to brewing processes. I would like hon. Members who have listened to the speeches of the hon. Baronet and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford to listen for one moment to a point which has been erroneously impressed upon this House, and that is in regard to the great example that Ireland has shown in the way in which they manufacture beer in Ireland. Would it surprise the House to hear that, as a matter of fact, the great firm of Messrs. Guinness do not manufacture at all the beer as you regard beer in this country? Would it surprise the House to know that when hon. Members opposite were discoursing so eloquently upon brewing processes and the commodities used in light beers in Ireland,

Dublin stout and Dublin porter are as teetotally different from light beers which they were talking about, as last year's snow is from a summer's day? The hon. Members opposite have the absolute effrontery to speak in this way of the so-called Irish beer, and by so doing they show their entire ignorance of the whole matter. In all my life I have never heard before such lamentable ignorance as has been displayed upon this question. [Cries of "Divide, divide!"] I should like to point out the differences between this Bill and the Bill of 1901, a point which I do not think has been sufficiently discussed in the different arguments which have been used today. I would point out that in the Bill of last year two definitions——

MR. TOMLINSON rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

(5.29.) Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 140; Noes, 212. (Division List No. 129.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allen, C. P. (Glouc., Stroud.)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Atherley-Jones, L.
Banes, Maj. George Edward
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bignold, Arthur
Bill, Charles
Boland, John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Broadhurst, Henry
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, M. Vaughan-(C'rdigan)
Delany, William
Digby, John K. D. (Wingfield)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H. (M'dstone)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Finch, George H.
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Garfit, William
Gilhooly, James
Gore, Hn G. R. C Ormsby-(Salop.
Gulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hamilton, Mrq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hammond John
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'd
Hayden, John Patrick
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Howard, John (Kent, F'v'rsham
Hozier, Hon. James Hy. Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea
Joyce, Michael
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Lambert, George
Lawson, John Grant
Leamy, Edmund
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Govern, T.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John William
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, James Archibald
Murphy, John
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'y Mid)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Pickard, Benjamin
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strachey, Sir Edward
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wylie, Alexander
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Tomlinson and Mr. Price.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allen, William (Gateshead)
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn Herbert Henry
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitz Roy
Bain, Col. James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn Sir Micha
Beckett, Ernest William
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)

Brigg, John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burke, E Haviland-
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, RtHnJ.A.(Glasgow)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V C W (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Charrington, Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir J. P.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir E W (Br'y S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Higginbottom, S. W.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horniman, Frederick John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jones, William (Carnarv'nshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh)
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Lees
Labouchere, Henry
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw H.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott, (Birkenhead)
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Logan, John William
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M Iver, Sir Lewis (Edingb'gh W
M'Killop, James, (Stirlingshire
M'Laren, Charles, Benjamin
Maxwell, W. J. H (Durfriesshire
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Duncan V.
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robinson, Brooke
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Henry
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Spencer, Rt. Hn C R (Northants
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E
Thomas, David Alfred (M'rthyr
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan Gower
Thompson, Dr EC (Monagh'n, N
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col Sir C E H (Sheffield)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wallace, Robert
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Brim
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham-Quin, Major H. W.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Flower and Dr. Farquharson.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House declines to proceed with the consideration of a Bill interfering with freedom in the manufacture of beer in this country, which, whilst it imposes upon the scientific development of British brewing industries arbitrary restrictions that cannot be enforced upon foreign competitors, in no way provides safeguards for the public health, or secures for consumers a guarantee as to the purity of the materials employed.

Adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, April 24th, 1902.

POULETT PEERAGE.

Petition of William Turnour Thomas Poulett, claiming to be Viscount Hinton of Hinton Saint George and Earl Poulett, both in the Peerage of England, to His Majesty, praying His Majesty to be graciously pleased to direct a writ to be issued to summon the petitioner to the present Parliament by the title of Viscount Hinton of Hinton Saint George and Earl Poulett, together with His Majesty's reference thereof to this House, and the Report of the Attorney-General thereon thereunto annexed—Presented (by command), read, and referred to the Committee for Privileges to consider and report.

BARON DUFFERIN AND CLANDEBOYE.

Ordered, That the report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on the 21st day of April last, that the right of Baron Dufferin and Clandeboye to vote at the elections of representative peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

Imperial Institute—(Petition for Bill).

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE—(PETITION FOR BILL).

Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

NEWCASTLE AND GATESHEAD WATER BILL [H.L.].

Reported, with Amendments.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT TELEPHONE BOARD BILL [H.L.],

NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (MANCHESTER AREA) BILL [H.L.].

Committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

BRADFORD-ON-AVON GAS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 24th of February, and Friday last, discharged; and Bill committed.

BARKING GAS BILL,

OMAGH URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL,

GRAND JUNCTION WATER BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed, the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

TICEHURST WATER BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

CHIGWELL, LOUGHTON, AND WOODFORD GAS BILL [H.L.],

WATERFORD AND BISHOP FOY ENDOWED SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.],

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

KENT WATER BILL.

SOUTHPORT AND LYTHAM TRAMROAD BILL.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year 1901.

TREATY SERIES, No. 10 (1902).

Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and Zanzibar. Signed at London, 27th June, 1901. Ratifications exchanged at London, 22nd February, 1902.

TRADE REPORTS.

1. Miscellaneous Series. No. 576. Mineral Resources of Greece.
2. Annual Series.
   No. 2770. United States (Texas).
   No. 2771. Spain (Corunna).
   No. 2772. Venezuela (Cuidad Bolivar).

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1902.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.

1. Report of the Committee of Inquiry, 1901.
2. Evidence taken before the Committee of Inquiry, 1901 (with Appendix).

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

1. Report of the Committee of Inquiry, 1901.
2. Evidence taken before the Committee of Inquiry, 1901 (with Appendix).

SOUTH AFRICA.

1. Despatch by General Lord Kitchener, dated 8th March, 1902, relative to military operations in South Africa (in continuation of [Cd. 965.]).
2. Return of farm buildings, etc, in Cape Colony and Natal destroyed by the Boers.

INDIA (LAND REVENUE).

Papers regarding the land revenue system of British India.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

NATIONAL DEBT (ANNUITIES).

Account of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all sums of money paid, to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt; and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years which have been granted for the same, and contracts for payments on death which have been made within the year ended 5th January, 1902. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITIONS.

VIVISECTION.

Petition for legislation for suppression of the practice of; of meeting at Swiss Cottage; read and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.]

Amendments reported (according to order).

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW): The object of the Amendment to Clause 1, which stands in my name is to restrict the operation of the Bill to the United Kingdom. As at present drafted, it would apply to the Colonies, the objections to which I explained at the Committee stage.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, Sub-section (3), line 10, o leave out 'into any part of His Majesty's dominions.'"—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD MONKSWELL: Clause 1 provides that, if any person commits any of the offences mentioned, he shall be liable to penalties not exceeding £50. I desire to reduce that sum to £20, which is the highest amount that can be recovered summarily in Scotland, and it is desirable that the penalties should be the same in both countries.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 19, to leave out fifty' and to insert 'twenty.'"—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Further Amendments made; Bill to be read 3ª tomorrow; and to be printed as amended. (No. 50.)

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—MARTIAL LAW IN CAPE COLONY.

*LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, I beg leave to ask His Majesty's Government the Questions standing in my name—viz.: Whether at any time during the war military operations have taken place, either in the Cape Peninsular, or in the districts of Port Elizabeth or East London, or within an area of fifty miles from the coast at any point for upward of 600 miles between Cape Town and the border of Natal; if so, at what point or points, what forces were engaged, and what casualties, if any, resulted; whether at any time since March, 1901, the Supreme Court has not held its sittings without any interruption both at Cape Town and Grahamstown; and whether, with the exception of the towns on the Northern Circuit, the judges of assize have not held Courts in most of the twenty other circuit towns; and whether any difficulty has been found in executing the process of these Courts in the districts subject to their jurisdiction; and, if so, when and where, on what occasions, and in what towns. I do not wish to raise again the contentions which were urged on this side of the House in the last discussion on the subject of the application of martial law.† I said on that occasion that in certain large districts in Cape Colony the state of things existed which I indicate in my Questions. The noble and learned Earl the Lord Chancellor challenged my statement, though I do not think he contradicted it.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I asked upon what authority the noble Lord made that statement, but I received no reply.

*LORD COLERIDGE: The noble and learned Earl is quite right. He challenged my statement, but he did not contradict it. I now place on the Paper the districts to which I alluded; I specify them and define them; and I urge, with regard to those districts, that to impose martial law without Parliamentary sanction and by the mere *fiat* of the Executive was an illegal act. The noble and learned Earl, in combating the arguments addressed from this side of the House and in justifying the imposition of martial law in such districts, even if they were in the state which I allege, set forth a certain doctrine which was new and surprising to myself, and which, pushed to its logical extremity, would seem to go the length of saying that, if we were at war somewhere, the Executive, without Parliamentary sanction, might impose martial law anywhere. That is a doctrine in which, if I may say so with all modesty, I cannot concur; and I have in my favonr the opinion of Lord Davey—a high legal authority—who stated emphatically the other evening that he could not assent to any such doctrine. I also alluded to certain Regulations with regard to the application of martial law which bore the sanction of two successive Secretaries of State for the Colonies and the Law Officers of the Crown, and I said that those Regulations had been sent to all the Colonial Governors as the final mind of the Government of the day upon the application of martial law.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of SALISBURY): Has the noble Lord the document in which the statement was included that the Regulations represented the final mind of the British Government?

*LORD COLERIDGE: The heading of the Rules which I hold in my hand is as follows: "Proposed Rules to be introduced on the subject of martial law into the Colonial Regulations." I understand that they were so introduced, and I think they may, therefore, be correctly described as representing the mind of the Government of the day. Those Regulations lay down the principle that the Governor should not proclaim martial law unless he is satisfied that there are men in armed resistance to the authority of the Crown; that such armed resistance cannot be dealt with by the Military acting merely in aid of the civil power in the ordinary manner; that such armed resistance cannot be promptly and effectually suppressed otherwise than by subjecting the inhabitants of the disturbed district to direct military control, and by inflicting summary punishments on offenders against the peace. It would appear, although I cannot state it as a fact, that those Regulations, containing the stipulations which I have read to the

† See preceding volume, p. 123.

House, were, in fact, conveyed to Lord Milner, and that in the year 1900 he expressed his concurrence in them. There is an allusion in a letter by Mr. Schreiner, the then Cape Prime Minister, to a certain Circular Despatch from the Colonial Office, which I interpret to mean the Despatch containing the words I have quoted. If I am wrong, I can easily be contradicted. If that be the case, these Colonial Regulations in regard to martial law were before the Ministers at the Cape, were approved of by them, and were further approved of in the year 1900 by Lord Milner. More than that, on November 28th, 1899, Mr. Schreiner, in a Minute to Lord Milner, said:—

"Ministers beg specially to draw the attention of his Excellency to the great importance, from the legal and other points of view, of handing over prisoners arrested by the military authorities to the civil authorities, to be dealt with by the ordinary procedure in conformity with law."

In a Report, dated November 25th, 1899, which was transmitted to Lord Milner, Sir Richard Solomon (Attorney General at the Cape) said—

"I think it right to point out the grave complications which may arise if, in districts where martial law has been proclaimed, persons charged with the commission of serious crimes should be tried before courts-martial while the Civil Courts are still open. Martial law has been proclaimed on grounds of necessity. I have very little doubt, however, that such a proclamation cannot be justified on legal grounds. There is no statute authorising such proclamation, and the prerogative of the Crown, under which it may probably be proclaimed when necessity requires it, has not been delegated to the Governor in his commission. It is because I have such serious doubts as to the legality of the proclamation of martial law in this colony that I am exceedingly anxious that nothing should be done by the military authorities, under cloak of such a proclamation, which will provoke an application to the Supreme Court, whereby such proclamation might be declared null and void. It may often be absolutely necessary for the safety of the country and for the suppression of rebellion to arrest persons suspected of crimes without the authority of a warrant obtained in the usual way. This is one of the reasons for the proclamation of martial law. I do strongly hold, however, that persons so arrested should be handed over to the civil authorities to be dealt with by them by the ordinary civil procedure. The object of martial law is not to obtain convictions against persons on mere suspicion or on evidence which would not be recognised as sufficient in Civil Courts of Justice. It is, therefore, highly desirable that as long as the Civil Courts are open all persons arrested by the military for the commission of crimes against the laws of the land should be handed over to the magistrates to be dealt with by them."

Again, on November 27th, 1899, dealing with some instructions issued by General Buller to the magistrates with regard to martial law, Sir Richard Solomon stated that—

"The establishment of special Courts for the trial of civilians for the offences specified in General Buller's instructions would be contrary to the law of the land, and the sentences of such Courts would, strictly, be illegal, and would have to be legalised by an Act of Indemnity. Paramount necessity may require the establishment of such Courts when the Civil Courts are closed, and the safety of the country demands the prompt trial and punishment of persons arrested for offences, and in such cases it is right that such Courts should be established. Where, however, the Civil Courts are open for the trial of offenders, I must again point out how necessary it is that persons arrested by the military authorities should be tried in the ordinary way by duly constituted Courts. The fact that the sentences of courts-martial established on the grounds of paramount necessity are illegal is an additional reason for my earnest desire to have all peasons, where possible, tried by legally established Courts."

I apologise for the length of the extracts I have read, but they are quotations hardly one word of which could be omitted. Sir Richard Solomon, who put this forward as his interpretation of the law, is a person of no mean importance. Since writing this declaration he has been appointed to a high office in the newly-annexed territories, and he is at present the legal adviser to Lord Milner. Now, I have two or three very simple questions to ask the Government. Were Lord Carnarvon's Regulations brought to the attention of Lord Milner? Did Lord Milner and the constitutional legal advisers at that time approve of them? If they approved of them, why have they not been observed? Further, I should like to know whether the Government do or do not agree with the law as expounded by Sir Richard Solomon, their own legal adviser to their own constituted authority. I submit that the opinion of Sir Richard Solomon is worthy of high regard, and that it is being daily and hourly violated in the territories defined in my Question. I think, therefore, that I am justified on all grounds in calling the attention of the House to this state of things, with a view,

if possible, to its being altered or mitigated. I am well aware that it may be said that this is an inopportune moment to bring forward this question. If I thought that the ventilation of a matter of this supreme importance could militate in the smallest degree against the success of the negotiations for peace, I should be the last to allude to it. I cannot see myself how the application of martial law to territory far removed from the seat of war can possibly affect any negotiations that may be passing between the combatants; but, on the other hand, I believe that martial law applied in this way constitutes a very real and solid obstacle to the success of the peace negotiations. The application of martial law—martial law as it is now applied—is leading every day to the steady manufacture of recruits for the enemy, and I am not without hope that the discussion of the subject may induce the Government to cease to impose martial law in those districts—and I am not alluding to any other districts—where it can come into conflict with the ordinary law. To my mind, the truest advocate for peace is the man who would urge the Government to mitigate, if not to remove, that which is, in my judgment, both illegal and disastrous to the welfare of the colony.

*LORD ALVERSTONE: My Lords, since I have had the honour of a seat in your Lordships' House, I have intervened but very rarely in your debates. If this were an ordinary political question, or a subject connected with party politics, holding my present office, I should abstain from intervention in this debate; but after careful reflection on the earlier speech made by the noble and learned Lord, the report of which I have read, and having regard to what he has said today, I ask permission to say a few words with reference to the matter. The question raised is a vital one, and it is closely connected with some of the most important interests of the Empire and the duties of the Executive. I had the privilege for twelve years to be the adviser of Her late Majesty's Government in the position of Attorney General, and during that time it was my duty to make myself acquainted with this question, not merely by reading a few passages from text-books or from speeches, but by endeavouring to get to the bottom of the matter and its principle. It is because I think the observations of my noble and learned friend on the last occasion and today would lead to serious misunderstandings of what the true and proper view of martial law is, and what are the true principles which the Executive should consider in relation to it, that I feel impelled to address your Lordships.

Let me go back to the principle of this matter. My complaint of the speech made by my noble and learned friend on the last occasion is that he overlooks altogether as many persons who speak on this subject have overlooked, the fundamental distinction in the difference between military law and martial law. On the last occasion I noticed that my noble and learned friend quoted Coke, who said that when the Courts were open martial law cannot be executed. If any one takes the trouble to read carefully the discussion which took place at the time these words were used, he will find that Hale, Comyn, Coke, and others cited by the noble lord were speaking of military law as applied to soldiers, and of the attempt of the Crown to enforce military law in time of peace on civilians. At no stage in the discussions in Parliament on the Petition of Right did any question arise as to the duty of the Executive when there was a state of war, or when the kingdom was in danger. The fundamental objection I take to my noble friend's question and the arguments he used is that his statements and arguments are only consistent and reconcilable with the position that he was speaking, or should have been speaking, of military law as distinguished from martial law. At the time of the discussions on the Petition of Right, as many writers have pointed out, no question of martial law properly so called arose. The martial law which had then to be discussed was the old law of the "marshall," and had nothing to do with martial law properly so called, although the two names have often been confused. All those who were then striving to protect the interests of the people were protesting against the Crown in times of peace trying civilians by a military tribunal as distinguished from the ordinary Civil Courts; and it was from that point of view Hale and Coke spoke.

Side by side with this military law now embodied in the Mutiny Acts, by which

soldiers are governed in times of peace and war by the military codes, there was martial law as we are dealing with it today, and as recognised by Hale and Coke, and by the great writers who have written on the subject. What is that? That is the law by which it is the paramount duty of the Executive to do what is necessary to defend the Commonwealth against the King's enemies. That is the root and foundation of martial law. The martial law founded on necessity arises solely from the duty of the Executive and the Government of the day to protect His Majesty's dominions. Vice-Chancellor Kent says—

"Martial law is quite different from ordinary military law; it is justified by paramount necessity and proclaimed by a military chief."

I could quote many other passages which show how clearly he appreciated the distinction. The acts must be acts done by necessity for the defence of the Commonwealth where there is war within the realm. These are the justifications of martial law—the safety of British possessions and the security of British lives and property. The whole question is—Is there such a state of war or rebellion that it cannot be put down by the civil authority, or by the military authorities acting under the orders of the civil authorities? I should not detain your Lordships on this part of the subject, but for the extraordinary arguments used on former occasions and repeated on the present occasion. The distinction has been pointed out by the great American writers; it was explained by Lord Brougham in the great Demarara debates, it has been written on by Professor Dicey, by Finlason, and by one of the most philosophic lawyers of the present day, Sir Frederick Pollock; and therefore I submit that, unless my noble and learned friend is able to show that his demands are consistent with martial law as I have ventured to explain it, great mischief lurks in his question. I am speaking, of course, of martial law in the sense to which I have referred—namely, that law which it is the duty of the Executive to establish for the protection of the kingdom. What does my noble and learned friend say? He says that because in some parts of a territory, however large, the Courts may be open, there cannot be martial law in the sense I have indicated. He endeavours to drive those who hold my view into maintaining the position that if there is war somewhere, there might be martial law anywhere. There cannot be a greater travesty of the arguments I am supporting; because the foundation of martial law is necessity, and the limits of what the Executive may do under Martial Law is limited by that necessity. They have not the abstract or absolute right of suddenly saying that the Courts shall not sit. But at the same time they are bound to do everything in their power to maintain the safety of the Empire, and to protect the whole Empire against the King's enemies. This is no duty of the Government different from the duty of private individuals, except in degree. The mayors of towns and other responsible authorities, if riot and rebellion take place, have the duty to enforce a kind of martial law; and there is only a greater and paramount duty on the Government not to hesitate or falter in the matter, but, if the necessity demands it to declare martial law and put it in force.

My noble and learned friend suggested that, because the Courts are open in some places, there can be no martial law within the jurisdiction of these Courts. There is the highest authority for saying that for many years those who have had the responsibility of advising the Crown have taken a different view. I would appeal to the opinion of Sir Robert Henley and the hon. Charles Yorke, Attorney General and Solicitor General—no mean authorities—and I refer to them only because the opinion was delivered 150 years ago. In 1757, in dealing with this question, they used these words, directly negativing the main proposition of my noble and learned friend—

"By proclamation of martial law the ordinary course of law and justice is not suspended or stopped any further than is absolutely necessary to answer the then military service of the public and the exigencies of the province."

I am expressing my own opinion, formed as the result of the study of many writings and speeches on this subject; and I say that if the Executive, when they proclaim martial law, unnecessarily put an end to the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts, they are exceeding their authority. The

mere fact of the sitting of a Court in this or that district cannot have any bearing on the question under discussion. We are not in the same position in the point of view of communications as we were 250 years ago. Have telegraphs and railways made no difference? Such an area as the noble and learned Lord referred to must comprise many thousands of square miles. May there not be going on in that district action aimed at the Government and British dominion, even though the Court may be sitting in the very town where that action is going on? To limit, or attempt to limit, the authority, duty, and responsibility of the Executive, and to enable the Executive to shift that responsibility on to the shoulders of the Civil Courts, would be to invite them to abandon their responsibility and to decline their duties.

What is the real necessity for martial law? It is the presence of the King's enemies, public or secret. You may have enemies working effectively against you, although there is no armed force within 200 miles. A military commander may get information which it is quite impossible for him to publish, and his paramount duty may be to take action in consequence. Is he to go to the Courts and ask for an injunction or a *mandamus*, when the man is at that moment sending information to the enemy or taking action which may in a few days develop into a crisis? Is the military authority to wait, and not to act until the Civil Court has given authority? The result of that would be that the responsibility which now rests with the Executive under martial law would not rest with them, but with the civil tribunals. Therefore, my noble and learned friend; whose opinion I value, by asking whether the Courts are sitting here and there, and by endeavouring to show that the Government have been guilty of illegal acts, and that the Executive have had no right to proclaim martial law, is approaching the question in the wrong way. Let him, if he can, argue that there has been no necessity for martial law at all. But I protest against its being stated by lawyers that the Government are powerless to take the necessary steps to protect the Empire and any part of the dominions of the King because in this or that part, linked though the parts are by telegraph and the present means of communication, there may be a Court sitting. The Executive are bound to do what is necessary. The action of officers in proclaiming martial law may afterwards be tried in the Civil Courts, and, unless it can be shown that the officers acted *bona fide*, they may be and have been mulcted in damages. I will not discuss the difficult question as to how far the necessity of the act could be inquired into, but it is perfectly plain that on the question of *bona fides* the act may be challenged. The justification of what is done under martial law does not rest on the fact that the acts, illegal in themselves, will afterwards be justified by an act of indemnity. The justification rests on the necessity of the action, and that is judged by circumstances which can generally only be known to the Government of the day. If, in such a discussion as this, the idea is to be supported that Governors of colonies and others can only act with the permission of the Civil Courts, there is an end to anything like responsibility or effective action on the part of the Executive. I do not know in the least what the answer of the Government may be; but if as was stated in one of the discussions, these Courts were sitting at the request of the Executive, it is in accordance with procedent. If the Commander-in-Chief has, in cases in which it was considered desirable, craved in aid the Civil Courts, the state of things would be exactly the same as has been found in a great many cases in which martial law has been established without question.

I hope I have at any rate made my own opinion plain. My view is that, keeping clear of all questions of military law, keeping clear of all questions as to what might be done in times of peace, there is a paramount and existing duty and authority of the Executive to put in force martial law as we understand it for the protection of the colony; and if on consideration my noble and learned friend feels that I have at any rate pointed out to him some grounds for thinking that the distinction that he has drawn is not well-founded, and that he could only use the argument he used in your Lordships' House some five weeks ago by for the moment forgetting the point of view from which the learned writers to whom he referred were speaking—if, as I have said, there exists

this duty and this responsibility, will it not also occur to him that very great harm may be done to those who are responsible by such debates as these? Here are men acting 7,000 miles away; they ought not to wish to act under the direct instruction of anybody at home; if they do they neglect their duty. The responsibility is theirs; we ought not to increase the burden of their responsibility; and I do respectfully submit to your Lordships that if the state of things in the Cape Colony was such as I have no doubt it was, although I have no information beyond what I have seen in the public papers, that proclamation of martial law was justified. If for the safety of the Empire and the safety of the colony it was necessary that martial law should be enforced, that arrests should take place, that houses should be entered without legal authority, then I do respectfully submit to my noble and learned friend that the fact that a Court was sitting in this place or that place and discharging its duty is immaterial, and to raise the suggestion that there cannot be martial law because Courts are sitting is to lose sight of the principles upon which alone martial law is justified, and to put responsibility upon the shoulders of those who ought not to bear it.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord RAGLAN): My Lords, as Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London have been from the commencement of the War bases of the British Army in South Africa, they have been continually the scenes of military operations since war was declared.

*LORD COLERIDGE: By military operations I do not mean merely the moving of troops from place to place, but military operations of an active character which might possibly have involved casualties.

*LORD RAGLAN: It would entail much reference to Lord Kitchener and much work on the Staff in South Africa to draw up a detailed and full Report of all the collisions with the enemy which have taken place within the area of 30,000 square miles as to which the noble Lord asks for information. No general action of magnitude has taken place within that area, but it may be said that there has been a large amount of fighting over the greater proportion of it. In most cases this fighting has consisted chiefly of collisions between hostile patrols, and it would be extremely difficult to give exact numbers as to the force engaged on either side or the actual casualties. Six hundred miles of coast line could not be adequately protected from constant importation of arms and ammunition without the application of military force, and as a matter of fact it was found that large amounts, both of arms and ammunition, were being landed and supplied to the King's enemies. Supposing it was true that no conflicts whatever had taken place within that area of 30,000 square miles, it would only prove that His Majesty's forces were sufficient to prevent any such supplies being given to the enemy; and the Return moved for by the noble and learned Lord would be entirely misleading if the inference were drawn from it that there was, therefore, no occasion whatever for the imposition of martial law in these districts. My answer will cover the noble and learned Lord's last question, and I merely give that answer in illustration of the difficulty of replying to questions at such a distance, put by those who are not acquainted with the military situation.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My noble friend has explained the difficulties which exist in making a Return, and I wish in a few words to state the somewhat broader grounds of objec ion to this Motion entertained by His Majesty's Government. I hope I may ask my noble and learned friend in what sense he has moved this Motion. If it is academic, it is useless; if it is practical, it is dangerous and mischievous. His Majesty's Government are unwilling that those who are absent should suppose that the Government at home are not mindful of the necessity of protecting them from attack. I am not for one moment about to throw responsibility upon those who constitutionally represent the Government of the Cape Colony. It is unnecessary to do so, and that is what I wish to avoid. I know not against whom my noble and learned friend makes this attack. I hope the

makes it against His Majesty's Government only; and it is sufficient for me now to say that the Government believe that the steps which have been taken were necessary, legal, and wisely taken, and desire to accept the full responsibility for what has occurred. That being so, let me point out to my noble and learned friend that the position he has taken up in regard to the imposition of this law is not quite accurate in point of fact. He asked—

"Have you sent out to the Cape Colony the instructions which Lord Carnarvon gave twenty-five years ago in relation to martial law?"

His Majesty's Government have not sent them out, and if they had, I think they would have been guilty of a serious act of unconstitional interference. Those instructions were sent out to Crown colonies. Why should we tell the Government of the Cape Colony how they should act under constitutional government? They have there a Ministry representing the rights of the people in that colony as much as His Majesty's Government represent the rights of the people here, and, as a fact, they were most watchful of the interests of the civilian population, and jealous of any unconstitutional dealing with them in the exercise of martial law.

My noble friend has quoted proceedings which took place in 1899. Soon after the outbreak of the war the Attorney General of the Cape Colony pointed out that the exercise of martial law would interfere with civil rights. He was acting then as the defender of the civilian population. But time went on, and unfortunately the Cape Colony became honeycombed with treason and treachery. There was a state of things existing there which rendered it impossible for His Majesty's soldiers to control the war without the assistance of martial law. Lord Kitchener made that representation. He said he was paralysed in his action by traitors and rebels there, and it was necessary that martial law should be proclaimed. He had to deal with a condition of things which probably no soldier has had to deal with before. There were rebels all round him, not armed forces with distinctive uniforms so that he might know they were hostile forces, but men at the plough one hour and in a few hours with weapons in their hands fighting against us. There were men who passed through the country contraband of war, and there were ships delivering contraband of war on the coasts. What is the noble and learned Lord's suggestion? His suggestion is that Lord Kitchener should have sent to some Court which was sitting for a warrant to enter a farmer's house and search for arms; that he should lay an information before one of the Courts in order to seize contraband of war landed on the coast. The noble and learned Lord contends, as the Lord Chief Justice pointed out, that because at some distant spot a Court was sitting the efforts of our military forces were to be paralysed, and that there was nothing to be done to stop the state of things existing. Lord Kitchener acted as a soldier was bound to act. Nothing was arbitrarily done. When these representations were made, Sir Gordon Sprigg, who had shown himself to be a most constitutional Minister, went to Pretoria. He had an interview with Lord Kitchener, and arrangements were made as to the terms upon which martial law should be proclaimed. Those terms involved the protection of the civil population, and those terms having been effected, martial law was proclaimed. It was not an arbitrary proclamation, but one taken charge of by Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson, the Governor of the Cape Colony. The proclamation was countersigned by his Excellency the Governor and by Sir J. Gordon Sprigg the Prime Minister. He had consented, who had been fighting the battle against martial law as long as the civilian view could prevail. And now the noble Lord says, "Have you sent out Lord Carnarvon's instructions given twenty-five years ago?" There is proof that the civilian element, the Constitutional element, acted with care, inasmuch as they demanded that a Board should be appointed with civilians upon it to hear the complaint of any human being injured by martial law, and to make full compensation to any such person out of the revenues of the colony; and there was a proclamation to that effect by Major-General Kelly.

I am sorry to have detained the House so long, but His Majesty's

Government feel strongly on this question. I really am not desirous to come into conflict with my noble friend, but I can assure him that these Motions do no good, and can do, and are doing, a great deal of harm. Are we to tell loyal subjects who have never asked him to represent them that we care not for their protection by martial law, or to tell their enemies that there are people in this country who condemn His Majesty's Government? No doubt the speech of the noble Lord will read better than it has sounded to us. It will sound well in Dutch. It will be read in every camp where our enemies are. They will hope, and believe, that there are friends and allies in this country who are willing to condemn everything done by the British Government, and have nothing but words of encouragement to give to the enemies of their country.

*LORD COLERIDGE: I understand that I have no right of reply; but I should like to ask the noble and learned Lord if he can tell me what the Colonial Office Despatch was which Lord Milner gave to his Ministers on January 4th, 1900, if it was not Lord Carnavon's circular. May I also ask whether it is not the fact that in the year 1878, that circular was submitted by Sir M. Hicks Beach to the then Governor of Cape Colony, which was not a Crown Colony?

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The circular may have been submitted to him for his information; but no instructions have ever been given to a Constitutional Governor as to the way in which he should administer a Constitutional Colony.

INDIA—IMPERIAL CADET CORPS—EQUIPMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF AILESBURY: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Viceroy of India's attention has been drawn to the public statement that part of the equipment of the new Imperial Cadet Corps is to consist of a saddle cloth of the skin of the snow leopard, and whether in view of the fact that this animal is not only rare but practically harmless, instructions will be given to His Excellency to prevent this wanton slaughter and extermination.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of HARDWICKE): In reply to the first part of the noble Marquess's Question, the equipment of this corps is entirely in the hands of the Viceroy. As to the further Question, I am afraid I cannot give my noble friend any assurance that the Secretary of State will interfere with the Viceroy's discretion in the matter; but I may mention that the Imperial Cadet Corps only consists of twenty officers, that the skins referred to were purchased by the Government, as they heard that this consignment was in the market, and that therefore no snow leopards were killed for the purpose of securing these skins. With regard to the harmless nature of the animal, I think that is an open question.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª Tomorrow.

DUNDEE CORPORATION LIBRARIES ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª, and reported from the Committee. (No. 51.)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL. (No. 52).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL. (No. 53.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock, till Tomorrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 24th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Plymouth, Devonport, and South-Western Junction Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Imperial Institute Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time tomorrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz :—

London and North-Western Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

WREXHAM WATER BILL [LORDS].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

SCARBOROUGH TRAMWAYS BILL.

NORWICH CORPORATION (ELECTRICITY, ETC.) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.*

YORK CORPORATION BILL.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS in pursuance of Standing Order No. 83, relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion, the York Corporation Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Private Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Mr. CAWLEY reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS informed the House that the Committee on Group J of Private Bills not being appointed to meet until Tuesday next, the parties promoting the Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) [Mallow] Bill, which was set down for consideration on the first day of the meeting of the Committee, had appeared before him and proved that the evidence of Dr. Thomas Browne, Inspector of the Local Government Board for Ireland, was

essential to their case, and that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That the said Dr. Thomas Browne do attend the Committee on Group J of Private Bills on Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Wadhurst Gas Bill, with an Amendment.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Milton and Bedlingtonshire; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lanark, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Pickering and Tyldesley; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Bussage, against; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Guisborough, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOURS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Middlesbrough (three), Grangetown, Sheffield, Worcester, Bradford (Yorkshire), and Wadsley Bridge; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

Petition from King's Lynn, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

DUTIES ON BRITISH GOODS (FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return ordered, "of the rates of import duties levied in European countries, the United States, and Japan upon the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

MAINTENANCE OF ROADS IN RURAL DISTRICTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTIES IN IRELAND.

Return ordered, "for the year ended 31st day of March, 1901, setting out

(a) The name of each administrative county in Ireland;
(b) The mileage of roads (including main roads maintained in each rural district);
(c) The average cost of maintenance per mile of such roads (including main roads);
(d) The mileage of main roads in each rural district;
(e) The average cost of maintenance per mile of such main roads;
(f) Total mileage of roads under (b) in each county;
(g) Total mileage of main roads under (d) in each county;
(h) The total expenditure on roads under (b) in each county;
(k) The total expenditure on main roads under (d) in each county;
(l) Average cost of maintenance per mile of roads under (b) in each county;
(m) Average cost of maintenance per mile of main roads under (d) in each county;

all particulars to be in respect of the said period."—(*Mr. Kennedy.*)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORT.)

Copy presented of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACT 1879 AND 1884.

Return presented relative thereto [Address 23rd April; *Mr. Jesse Collings*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 154.]

WARS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA (COST AND EXPENDITURE).

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 17th April; *Mr. Sydney Buxton*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 155.]

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.

Account presented of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all sums of money paid to the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt, and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years, etc., granted within the year ended 5th January, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 156.]

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY.

Copy presented of Report of the Astronomer to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the year 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented of Return of Farm Buildings, etc., in Cape Colony and Natal destroyed by the Boers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA (DESPATCHES.)

Copy presented of Despatch by General Lord Kitchener, dated 8th March, 1902, relative to military operations in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing, for the year ended 31st day of March, 1902, (1) the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, to the Revenue collected by Imperial officers; (2) the expenditure on English, Scottish, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively which are available for Imperial expenditure (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 90, of Session 1901)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

CUSTOMS IMPORT DUTIES.

Return ordered, "giving the name of each article on which the proposed Customs Import Duties of 3d. and 5d. respectively will be charged with the quantities of each imported during the financial year ended the 31st day of March, 1902, and the respective amounts which each article would have contributed to the revenue had the proposed Duty then been in operation.

Name or description of article.	Quantity imported during year ended 31st March, 1902.	Rate of duty.	Amounts which would have been contributed by each article.
		d.	£ s. d.

—(*Mr. John Ellis.*)

(3.35.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Military Prisoners in South Africa.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended, upon the termination of the war in South Africa, to detain in custody either British civilian subjects or aliens who may be imprisoned undergoing sentences imposed by military tribunals or courts martial; and, if so, by what authority can this course of policy be adopted.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Question is, I think, the hon. Member will see, premature at the present moment.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But was not the war ended last September twelvemonth?

The "Johannesburg Star."

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office gave orders that two articles from the "Johannesburg Star," enclosed in

Lord Milner's despatch to him of 26th April, 1899, should not be printed in [C. 9345]; and whether, seeing that there is no instance in all the papers and articles printed in this volume where Lord Milner having called his attention to any article the same was not printed or had previously been printed, will he explain why an exception was made in the case of these two articles.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have already informed the hon. Member in reply to his Question of the 18th that these articles were not considered of sufficient public interest to print. No exceptional course has been adopted, and I have nothing to add to that answer.

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether two articles from the "Johannesburg Star," enclosed in Lord Milner's despatch to him of 26th April, 1899, contained a passage that the people of the Rand are united and fixed in their determination not to accept their present political status as final, and not to remain for ever as helots under the domination of their Boer masters.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer is in the affirmative.

Deaths in Concentration Camps.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the explanation of the discrepancies between the original and revised figures in the Return of Deaths in the Concentration Camps in January and February last.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The original figures which were received by telegraph appear to be incorrect, but I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the revised figures.

Martial Law—Case of Mr. Cartwright.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Mr. Albert Cartwright has now completed the term of imprisonment imposed upon him a year ago by a court of law in Cape Colony; whether he is now free to return to England; and, if not, on what grounds, in the absence of any legal charge, he is compulsorily detained in Cape Town.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): He has completed his term of imprisonment. I am in communication with Lord Kitchener respecting his further detention.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last clause of my Question—on what grounds is Mr. Cartwright detained?

MR. BRODRICK: I answered that the other day in reply to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I shall take the opportunity to call the attention of the House to this subject after Questions.

Lord Wolseley's Visit to South Africa.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what facilities, if any, were offered to Lord Wolseley on the occasion of his recent visit to South Africa, having regard to the fact that he was Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in the early period of the South African War and his position as a military historian, to visit the scenes of the operations in South Africa, during the period of his supreme command of the British Army.

MR. BRODRICK: May I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to a Question put by the hon. Member for South Leitrim on March 18th, to which I have nothing to add.†

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: My Question now is whether any facilities were offered to Lord Wolseley to visit the battlefields. Will the right hon. Gentleman answer "Yes" or "No"?

MR. BRODRICK: I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Then I will put this Question—Was Lord Wolseley refused facilities to visit the battlefields?

† See preceding volume, p. 317.

December, 1901, officers specially selected have been appointed administrators of martial law in each area in addition to the officers commanding the districts; of these three have been Colonial officers selected by Lord Kitchener with special qualifications.

Courts Martial.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Courts Martial on Commandants Scheepers and Kritzinger took place with closed doors; and, if so, in view of it being laid down in paragraph 71, Manual of Military Law, that such a Court must be open to the public, military or otherwise, if he can state by what authority the public were excluded.

LORD STANLEY: I have no information to show that the trials referred to were held with closed doors. The procedure laid down in the Mauual of Military Law does not necessarily apply to Military Courts held under martial law.

Army Medical Service.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a medical officer attains the ranks of captain and major at three and twelve years of service, and a veterinary officer attains the same ranks at seven and a half and fifteen years respectively; if so, will he explain the reason for this difference.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why there are such differences in rank, pay, and promotion between the medical and veterinary services in the Army; and whether he is now prepared to place them on the same footing.

LORD STANLEY: The facts are practically as stated. A new Warrant for the Army Veterinary Department has just been issued giving considerable and additional advantages, and I am not prepared to make any further additions thereto.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: Will the noble Lord state what the advantages are?

LORD STANLEY: They are set out in the Warrant.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: Where is the Warrant to be obtained?

LORD STANLEY: I do not know whether it has been published in the Press, but it certainly is in the hands of those most interested.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: I shall apply for a copy.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member can have one.

Volunteer Camp Allowance.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough): On behalf of the hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state what the camp allowance for the Volunteer force will be in the present year.

LORD STANLEY: They will receive the same allowance as last year, viz., officers 8s. a day, and men, 2s. 6d. a day; except the battalions told off for the Field Army, who will get—officers 11s. 6d. a day, men 5s. a day.

Volunteer Service Medal.

MR. PIRIE: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the closer relations which now obtain between the different branches of the service, and with the view of having trained soldiers in the ranks of the Volunteer Force, the War Office will consider the advisability of allowing six years service with the Colours, six years with the Reserve, and fourteen years with the Volunteers, to count for the long service medal.

LORD STANLEY: This medal is intended for Volunteer service only. It would be most unfair to the Volunteers generally to allow men who had served in other forces to reckon such service as if it had been voluntary service.

Cavalry Commissions to Imperial Yeomanry Officers.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the number of officers of Imperial

South African League.

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that members on the executive of the South African League have for many months past openly advocated that all Boers taken prisoners should be immediately hung; that they have described the Boers as human vermin who should be placed on a lower level than Kaffirs; and whether, in view of these facts, he will forthwith give instructions to prevent this organisation holding meetings in South Africa during the war.

LORD STANLEY: I am not aware of the circumstances alluded to, and I do not propose to give any instructions on the matter.

Colonel Long.

MR. WILLIAM M'KILLOP (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware of the appointment of a Colonel Long to the position of Inspectory of Veterinary Hospitals in South Africa; will he state if this is the officer who lost his guns at Colenso, and what other qualifications he possesses for this particular appointment.

LORD STANLEY: Colonel Long, who is now Inspector of Veterinary Hospitals in South Africa, is the Artillery officer mentioned. He has a great practical knowledge of horses, and has long been known as one of the best horse masters in the Royal Artillery. He has done excellent service in the Remount Department for several months.

Martial Law in South Africa.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the Return respecting Martial Law in South Africa ordered by the House on the 8th April will be presented.

LORD STANLEY: As I have already informed the House, the preparation of this Return involves considerable labour, but I hope to be able to present the Return at no distant date.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I hope the Secretary for War will not forget that a Return identical with this was ordered in March last in another place.

Shot Drill at Lichfield Gaol.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will now state the action taken and the result of the full investigation which was called for and instituted with reference to the practice of inflicting the penalty of shot drill, which has been abolished in the Army since April, 1899, on prisoners in the military cells at Lichfield up till 17th February last.

LORD STANLEY: The officers concerned have been censured.

Tweefontein Incident.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now say how many cartridges fell into the hands of General de Wet when four months ago he captured the whole of the depôt camp at Tweefontein; and, if information on this point has not been communicated to the War Office, what explanation, if any, can be given for Lord Kitchener's reticence; if information has reached the War Office, will he explain why it has not been communicated to the public.

LORD STANLEY: I have nothing to add to the reply given to the hon. Member on the 21st January.†

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What is the reason for Lord Kitchener's reticence? Has the noble Lord anything to say as to that?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

Military Commandants in South Africa.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any qualifications as to rank, length of service, or other conditions have been required in respect of those appointed to be commandants of military districts established under the operation of martial law in South Africa; and whether such commandants have in all cases been officers of the British Army, or in some cases officers of the forces raised in the Cape or other Colonies.

LORD STANLEY: Officers in charge of districts are selected from the experienced senior officers available. Since

† See (4) *Debates*, ci., 455.

December, 1901, officers specially selected have been appointed administrators of martial law in each area in addition to the officers commanding the districts; of these three have been Colonial officers selected by Lord Kitchener with special qualifications.

Courts Martial.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Courts Martial on Commandants Scheepers and Kritzinger took place with closed doors; and, if so, in view of it being laid down in paragraph 71, Manual of Military Law, that such a Court must be open to the public, military or otherwise, if he can state by what authority the public were excluded.

LORD STANLEY: I have no information to show that the trials referred to were held with closed doors. The procedure laid down in the Manual of Military Law does not necessarily apply to Military Courts held under martial law.

Army Medical Service.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a medical officer attains the ranks of captain and major at three and twelve years of service, and a veterinary officer attains the same ranks at seven and a half and fifteen years respectively; if so, will he explain the reason for this difference.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why there are such differences in rank, pay, and promotion between the medical and veterinary services in the Army; and whether he is now prepared to place them on the same footing.

LORD STANLEY: The facts are practically as stated. A new Warrant for the Army Veterinary Department has just been issued giving considerable and additional advantages, and I am not prepared to make any further additions thereto.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: Will the noble Lord state what the advantages are?

LORD STANLEY: They are set out in the Warrant.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: Where is the Warrant to be obtained?

LORD STANLEY: I do not know whether it has been published in the Press, but it certainly is in the hands of those most interested.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: I shall apply for a copy.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member can have one.

Volunteer Camp Allowance.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough): On behalf of the hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state what the camp allowance for the Volunteer force will be in the present year.

LORD STANLEY: They will receive the same allowance as last year, viz., officers 8s. a day, and men, 2s. 6d. a day; except the battalions told off for the Field Army, who will get—officers 11s. 6d. a day, men 5s. a day.

Volunteer Service Medal.

MR. PIRIE: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the closer relations which now obtain between the different branches of the service, and with the view of having trained soldiers in the ranks of the Volunteer Force, the War Office will consider the advisability of allowing six years service with the Colours, six years with the Reserve, and fourteen years with the Volunteers, to count for the long service medal.

LORD STANLEY: This medal is intended for Volunteer service only. It would be most unfair to the Volunteers generally to allow men who had served in other forces to reckon such service as if it had been voluntary service.

Cavalry Commissions to Imperial Yeomanry Officers.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the number of officers of Imperial

Yeomanry who have been given commissions as captains on probation in cavalry regiments since the commencement of the war, and to what regiments such officers have been appointed; and whether he will state the number of subalterns of cavalry with at present four and five years regular Army service respectively.

LORD STANLEY: Seven officers, late of the Imperial Yeomanry, South Africa, and one from Roberts' Horse, have been granted commissions as captains on probation in the following cavalry regiments:—3rd and 6th Dragoon Guards; 3rd, 4th, 8th, and 14th Hussars; 6th Dragoons; and 21st Lancers. There are 34 subalterns of cavalry with four years service, 23 with five years service, and 36 with six years service.

Royal Field Artillery Uniforms.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he is aware that the distinguishing numbers of batteries in the Royal Field Artillery have lately been removed from the shoulder straps of the men's uniforms; and whether, with a view to maintaining the *esprit de corps*, and the old spirit of emulation between batteries, he will permit the wearing of these numerals to be resumed.

LORD STANLEY: The Royal Artillery full dress, which will be the walking out dress when the service dress clothing is issued, has cords on the shoulders, and does not therefore admit of the wearing of numerals.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): Were the officers of the batteries consulted before the change was made?

LORD STANLEY: I cannot say.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Can the Regulation be altered so as to have the numerals on other than walking out uniforms, which the men are not always wearing?

LORD STANLEY: I will inquire if it can be done in the case of the service dress.

Hong Kong Defences.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that, although the new territory on the Kowloon side of Hong Kong was acquired mainly for the purpose of protecting the Colony, no steps whatever have been taken to fortify the hills; and will he say whether this inaction has the sanction of the Defence Committee and His Majesty's Government.

MR. BRODRICK: May I refer the hon. Member to the answer which was given to a Question he put on this subject on March 24th, to which I have nothing to add.†

MR. WEIR: But this Question has never been asked before. Does not the right hon. Gentleman admit that this Kowloon territory was acquired for the better protection of the colony?

MR. BRODRICK: I admit nothing.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Why should Hong Kong be better protected than Gibraltar?

Naval Engineer Officers.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the engineer officers in the Navy are at their full strength; and, if not, will he state what is the number of present vacancies.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The numbers of engineer officers voted for the year 1902–1903 are not at present fully borne, and as the entry of officers from Keyham and from outside technical colleges does not take place until July, the hon. Member will understand that it is never possible for the numbers voted to be reached by this period of the financial year. The number of vacancies remaining to be filled is eighty-five.

MR. BARTLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state how many vacancies were

* See preceding volume, p. 823.

offered, how many candidates sat, and how many were successful at the last two examinations in January and March for the rank of assistant engineers for temporary service in the Navy.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There was no specific number of appointments as assistant engineers for temporary service offered for competition either in January or March. The examination in January was not held, as no candidates were forthcoming; in March two candidates presented themselves, of whom one was successful.

MR. BARTLEY: Am I to understand that these two examinations failed to attract any candidates?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: For temporary engineers, yes.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): May I ask whether there are at present engineers sufficient to man the A Division of the Fleet Reserve at Chatham?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the answer.

Subvention of Merchant Steamers for War Service.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether subventions for the right of pre-emption or hire of ships as armed cruisers or transports are paid by the Admiralty to companies whose ships fly the British flag but are owned abroad; whether, in the event of war, there is anything to prevent these companies from substituting a foreign flag for the British flag at short notice; and whether the Admiralty has any practical means of enforcing its right of pre-emption or hire in such a case, or whether, by abandoning the subvention, the companies could claim that the right of pre-emption had ceased.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No subventions have been at any time or are now paid for the right of pre-emption or hire of ships as armoured cruisers or transport to companies whose ships fly the British flag but are owned abroad. The second and third paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question involve important legal points which I am afraid I cannot deal with in answer to a Question. But the whole matter is being carefully considered with a view to defining the rights of the Admiralty in the event of the situation suggested by the hon. Member arising.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether information has reached the Admiralty that the owners of certain vessels forming part of the Royal Reserve of Merchant Cruisers have entered, or are about to enter, into a trade combination under foreign control; whether the conditions of the subsidy are compatible with such an arrangement; and whether the Admiralty are taking any action in the matter.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The situation referred to was certainly not contemplated when the present form of agreement was settled, and the Admiralty have appointed a Committee to consider and report on the purport and form of future subsidy agreements. Meanwhile, they have made an arrangement with the White Star Line which will preclude the possibility of any of their subsidised or retained merchant cruisers being transferred to a foreign flag without the consent of the Admiralty during the unexpired portion of the current subsidy agreement, terminating some three years hence.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): The hon. Gentleman only mentioned the White Star Line, but what about the other lines?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The White Star Line is the only one which has subsidised cruisers.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked the hon. Gentleman whether he would see that on the Committee there should be some person conversant with the law of nations.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not responsible for the nomination of the Committee, but I will take care that the reasonable wish of my hon. friend is represented to those who are.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any information to the effect that the vessels belonging to several line of steamboats trading between this country and the United States of America have been sold to a company with a capital of £34,000,000 and having its principal place of business in the United States, while the vessels will retain and will sail under the British flag; whether British vessels when sold to a foreign company having its principal place of business abroad retain their British registry, or whether, under such circumstances, the vessels cease to be British and become foreign vessels, dis entitled to a British register and to sail under the British flag.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have not before me information which will enable me to say that a sale of the vessels referred to has taken place. But if such a sale has taken place the vessels would lose their British registry.

H.M.S. "Cobra," "Condor" and "Mars."

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that the widows and orphans of those seaman and marines who lost their lives in the recent disasters to H.M.S. "Cobra," "Condor," and "Mars," are only entitled to pensions of 3s. 6d. for the widows and 1s. per child per week, and are not eligible for pensions on the scale awarded by the Government to the widows and orphans of soldiers who fall in war, which range from 5s. to 10s. for widows and 1s. to 2s. per child per week, the Government will remove the disability; whether, failing the ability of the Government to afford any augmentation from State funds, they will consider the advisability of soliciting the Lord Mayor to make an appeal to the benevolence of the nation to supply such additional funds as may ensure these sufferers sufficient to save them from destitution.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg also to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the disasters connected with H.M.S. "Condor," and H.M.S. "Mars," following upon the loss of H.M.S. "Cobra." His Majesty's Government will consider the possibility of charging the pensions of widows of seamen so killed upon public funds instead of upon the funds of Greenwich Hospital, which are now inadequate to meet the existing claims of old seamen who are qualified to receive the Greenwich Old Age Pensions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The matter is still under consideration, and I am unable at present to give any answer.

MR. KEARLEY: Is the matter under the consideration of the Admiralty or of the Treasury?

MR. ARNOLD-FOSTER: Of all the Departments concerned.

Shipbuilding Delays.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can say when the Report of the Departmental Committee, presided over by him, which has considered the causes of the delays in shipbuilding, will be in the hands of Members.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is hoped that the Report will be in the hands of hon. Members early next week.

Tientsin Operations.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the British forces operating at and around Tientsin from the 10th June to the 14th July, 1900, from the arrival of Admiral Sir Edward Seymour to the capture of the native city, sustained such casualties that those of the Naval Brigade alone amounted to 50 killed and 247 wounded; and whereas at Taku the total casualties of British forces ashore and afloat amounted to one killed and 13 wounded, for which a clasp has been granted, whether he will consider the advisability of recommending the issue of a clasp, inscribed "Tientsin," to the forces, Naval and Military, engaged in the operations between the dates specified, which included the defence of Tientsin and the capture of the Peiyang Arsenal.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The services of the British forces operating at and around Tientsin have not been overlooked. The operations were part of those which had for their object the relief of Peking, and the forces engaged receive for their gallant conduct a clasp, with the words "Relief of Peking" inscribed on it.

Treatment of Political Prisoners Abroad.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will assent to the preparation and issue of a Consular Return, showing the prison treatment extended to political prisoners in European countries and in the United States, and also in the British Colonies.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): His Majesty's Government have no official information as to the treatment of political prisoners in other countries, and I cannot therefore assent to the suggestion in the hon. Gentleman's Question.

MR. MACVEAGH: Seeing that information was obtained from our Consuls abroad as to the Rules which obtain in Foreign Parliaments, cannot the same course be taken on this Question?

LORD CRANBORNE: No, Sir.

MR. MACVEAGH: Has the noble Lord consulted the Irish Office on this matter?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: You must respect Lord Salisbury's son!

Persia.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, with a view to promote a stable peace in the East, His Majesty's Government are prepared to co-operate with other Powers in order to secure the independence of Persia and the development of her commercial and industrial resources by guaranteeing the neutrality of her territory; and whether His Majesty's Government will invite the Government of Persia and the European Governments represented at the Congress of Berlin to hold a Conference to consider the best means of attaining the objects set forth.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that I do not think any public advantage would be gained by the adoption of the step he suggests. My hon. friend probably has present to his mind the fact that there is in existence an agreement with Russia in connection with the integrity of Persia.

Military Operations in Uganda.

*MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have received any dispatches with reference to the recent Military operations in the Nile provinces of Uganda; and, if so, whether they will lay them upon the Table.

LORD CRANBORNE: Despatches have been received and are under consideration. They will be published in the *Gazette* in due course.

The New Corn Duties.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will explain why the list of articles subject to the new corn duty which has been laid upon the Table of the House does not include all those which were originally posted at the Custom House; and whether he will also publish a list of commodities which are liable to duty because of their ingredients, and the rate of duty to be levied on each.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The list of articles subject to the new corn duty laid on the Table of the House covers all those named in the list posted at the Custom House. Only unnecessary verbiage has been omitted. It is not practicable to prepare a complete list of specific commodities which will be liable to the new duty on importation because of their ingredients; but lists of this kind will be issued from time to time as experience is obtained.

MR. KEARLEY: Did the original list in the customs indicate "dextrine" and "Mandioca flour?"

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It indicated "Mandioca flour."

MR. LOUGH: Would it not be better, even if the list were slightly unaccurate, to issue as complete a one as possible as quickly as possible?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It will be done.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Has not the right hon. Gentleman promised to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the list issued to the Customs House?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, and this is the list exclusive o unnecessary verbiage.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: May we have the unnecessary verbiage. It would place us in a better position for estimating the number of new duties.

Great Eastern Railway—Continental Goods Rates.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can take steps to oblige the Great Eastern Railway Company to publish a list of its charges for the carriage of goods by sea between Rotterdam and Harwich.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My hon. and gallant friend will find the law on the subject contained in Section 33 (5) of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888. I have communicated with the Great Eastern Company and they inform me that the particulars relating to the charges for the carriage of goods by sea between Rotterdam and Harwich are duly published in compliance with the law.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates.

*MR. SOAMES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the action of the Beccles bench of magistrates in refusing certificates of exemption from vaccination for their children to C. E. Parnell and D. G. Reeve on the 21st March, although both applicants stated that they had a conscientious objection to vaccination; whether he is aware that the same magistrates require applicants for such exemption to attend at the magistrates' clerk's office beforehand to give notice of their intention to apply to the magistrates for exemption, and also require them to provide themselves with legal certificates of the births of their children; and will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.-W.): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Edward Pratt, of Gayton, who applied on two occasions, viz., on 3rd and 17th March, to the bench of magistrates at Grimstone, Norfolk, for a vaccination exemption certificate for his child, and was on both occasions refused, although he declared his conscientious conviction that his child would be injured by the operation; and, seeing that the same bench refused another applicant on 7th April, whether he will give instructions for the bench to grant the exemptions provided by the Vaccination Act, so that these parents may be saved from the trouble and expense of having to meet a prosecution.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Even assuming that the facts of the cases are precisely as stated in the Questions, I have no power to take any steps in the matter.

Post Office Volunteers' Annual Training Leave.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will state what facilities are to be offered to sorting clerks, postmen, and other Post Office officials during 1902 who desire to attend the Volunteer camps for annual training; and whether special leave, with full pay, will be granted as in former years.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): So far as the exigencies of the service will admit, Volunteers employed in the Post Office will be allowed the same facilities this year that they were allowed last year for the purpose of attending camps. Under the Treasury Regulations, those Volunteers whose regiments attend special camps, being attached to army corps, will be

allowed special leave, so far as the requirements of the service will admit, for a period not exceeding a fortnight, without civil salary, to attend camp. Those who devote their annual leave to this purpose will, of course, receive full civil pay.

Glasgow Postmen's Social Gathering.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will explain why the practice of allowing notices intimating the date and particulars of concerts and other entertainments to be exhibited in the Postmen's Office at Glasgow has been departed from in the case of two notices submitted to the postmaster having reference to social meetings of the local branches of the Postmen's Federation to welcome the executive council of the federation; and can he state why the postmaster or his representatives refused to initial these particular notices for exhibition.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The practice which formerly obtained at Glasgow of allowing unofficial notices to be exhibited in the Postmen's Office was irregular, and when it came under the notice of the postmaster it was stopped.

Promotion in the South-Eastern District Office.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if it is intended to pass over the senior sorters, Messrs. R. H. Burn and H. Johnson, in making promotions to the overseers class at the South-Eastern District Office; if so, will he state the reasons for passing over these officers, and will they be given an opportunity of stating why they should not be passed over before the appointments are made, seeing that they have been performing overseers' duties for about eight years and three years respectively, and been certified annually for many years past as competent to perform the highest duties of their class.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The claims and qualifications of the two sorters referred to will be considered with those of others before any promotions are made, but the Postmaster General cannot undertake that the confidential reports which will in due course be made to him respecting these sorters shall be communicated to them in order that they may discuss the question of their fitness for promotion. Such a course would be contrary to the practice of the Department and to the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): Will the same procedure be adopted in the Irish offices?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The procedure I have described is the usual one.

Postmen's Records.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, when a soldier goes on active service, records for past misconduct are cancelled; if so, is the same course adopted in the case of postal employees who have volunteered and been accepted for service in South Africa; and, if not, will he explain on what ground is the distinction made.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General cannot say whether the practice in the Army is as stated, but he sees no reason for adopting such a rule in the Post Office Service.

Mallaig Mail Service.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, in view of the fact that Mr. David MacBrayne, the contractor for the Stornoway, Kyle and Mallaig Mail Steamer Service, continues to employ a forty-one year old boat which has been shown to be frequently late on both the outward and return passage, will he consider the expediency of terminating the contract with Mr. MacBrayne, and inviting tenders from other steamship owners who are prepared to provide a steamer of greater speed, and in other respects adapted to the wants of the 30,000 inhabitants of the island of Lewis.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There have no doubt been many delays on the voyage, but during the last few months there has been a great deal of rough weather in the Minch. As regards

the question of terminating the present contract and of calling for tenders, the Postmaster General can only repeat the answer given to the hon. Member on the 13th of June of last year, which was to the effect that he was not prepared to take such a course, as he saw no reason to suppose that it would result in a more economical arrangement than the present.

MR. WEIR: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the boat is forty-one years old, and in consequence another steamer must take its place?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I confess I do not think the service is very satisfactory; but the subsidy is adequate, and I unfortunately see no possibility of getting a better service on reasonable terms.

Sorters in the London Postal Service.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will give the number of sorters attached to the London postal service serving with the colours in South Africa, the number of acting, temporary, casual, and supernumerary sorters and auxiliaries, and part time auxiliaries employed in the London postal service; and whether, in view of the condemnation of auxiliary labour by the Tweedmouth Committee and the representatives of organised labour, the Postmaster General will take steps to abolish this form of labour.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The number of sorters attached to the London postal service now serving with the colours in South Africa is 162; and the number of acting, temporary, casual, and supernumerary sorters employed in London is 406. The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension as to the findings of the Tweedmouth Committee upon the subject of auxiliary labour. While desiring as far as possible to discourage the employment of this class of labour, the Committee recognised the impossibility of altogether dispensing with it; and under present circumstances the Postmaster General sees no immediate prospect of being able to make any material reduction in the number so employed.

Sorters' Extra Duty at the East Central District Office.

MR. HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will grant a Return of the number of hours extra duty performed by sorters in the East Central District Office between eight o'clock p.m. and midnight, for three months from the 15th January, 1902.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General has ascertained that the number of hours of extra duty work as described was 6,348. There are about 600 sorters in the East Central District Office.

Allowances at the East Central District Office.

MR. HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a counter clerk and telegraphist of the East Central District, named Godbehear, received a risk allowance of 3s. per week when performing the duties of overseer and senior telegraphist from 1893 to 1896, which allowance was stopped in 1897; and whether, in view of the Tweedmouth Committee's recommendation that the rights of existing holders in risk allowances should be maintained, he will restore the allowance to this officer, and, if not, will he explain why this cannot be done.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Postmaster General will have inquiry made into this matter, and inform the hon. Member of the result.

Poor Law School Teachers.

MR. HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the service of a teacher in a poor law school is held recorded service as defined by the Elementary School Teachers Superannuation Act, 1898, and therefore under the existing Code entitles such a teacher to the issue of a parchment certificate under Article 63D; whether it is intended to remove professional distinction, if any, between teachers in poor law schools and those employed in other elementary schools, in order to secure that local Boards of Guardians

shall be able to obtain the services in poor law schools of qualified and efficient teachers.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The answer to the first point is in the negative. It appears, however, from the reply given recently to a similar Question addressed to my right hon. friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, that service in a poor law school is now accepted by the Board of Education for the purposes of Article 63 of the existing Code, and that in the Code of 1902 the Article will be included in a clearer form.

West Ham Board of Guardians.

MAJOR BANES (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that a person was nominated and elected for a ward on the West Ham Board of Guardians when she was already a member, and has twelve months to serve in another ward, without first resigning her seat; and whether, according to the Regulations of the Department, she can vote for or represent either ward.

MR. WALTER LONG: My attention has been called to this case. The real question appears to be whether the person referred to was disqualified for being elected as guardian for one ward whilst in office for another. I have no authority to decide this point, and there are no Regulations of the Local Government Board which affect the matter. The question can only be determined by an election court on a petition. I am, however, advised that it is open to considerable doubt whether she was not disqualified. She has applied to me to consent to her resigning her seat for the ward for which was she first elected, but in the circumstances I have not at present thought it expedient to accept the resignation.

Private Bill Procedure (Scotland) Act.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state whether the Commissioners recently appointed under the Private Bill Procedure (Scotland) Act to inquire into the Aberdeen Tramways Bill held any meeting to decide upon the place where their inquiry was to be held; if so, whether they decided to hold the inquiry in Edinburgh; and, if so, what were the reasons which induced them to hold it there rather than in Aberdeen, where the parties and the witnesses reside.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Provisional Order referred to is one of a group remitted for inquiry, comprising schemes from the North, East and South-West of Scotland; and Edinburgh was selected as the most central and convenient place for the consideration of the whole group, with the concurrence of the Chairman of the Commissioners, and, I believe, with the approval of the great majority of the parties interested. The Secretary for Scotland is not aware that any meeting was held by the Commissioners to decide upon the place of inquiry.

MR. BRYCE: Would it not be possible to arrange for the Commissioners to sit in different places to conduct these inquiries?

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It is perfectly possible. It is only a matter of arrangement.

MR. BRYCE: Is it the case that the Commission did not hold a meeting in this case to decide upon the place of inquiry?

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Chairman of the Commission was consulted.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): Have the Commission made any inquiry in Aberdeen into local conditions in connection with these proposed tramways?

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I cannot say. I believe in any case this Order could only have been taken today.

Highland Parochial Medical Officers.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the number of

parochial medical officers in each of the six crofting counties who do not possess the public health diploma required under the Public Health Act, 1897; and will he state why the Local Government Board for Scotland continues to confirm the appointment of medical officers in Highland crofting counties regardless of the conditions imposed by statute.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The Secretary for Scotland is informed by the Local Government Board that the figures are as follows:—Argyll County, twenty-three Local Medical Officers, of whom three possess statutory qualification; Inverness County, ten Local Medical Officers, of whom one possesses statutory qualification; Ross and Cromarty, eleven Local Medical Officers, of whom two possess statutory qualification; Sutherland County, no Local Medical Officers; Caithness County, no Local Medical Officers; Orkney and Shetland, three Local Medical Officers, none of whom possess statutory qualification. The Medical Officers who do not possess the public health diploma were appointed prior to the coming into operation of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897, and consequently do not require to possess the qualification. The Local Government Board do not recognise new appointments of Medical Officers who do not possess the statutory qualification.

DR. FARQUHARSON: Will the hon. Gentleman take into consideration the propriety of forming these counties into a combined district, so that they may get the services of highly qualified medical men?

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Mall to Charing Cross Road.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when the road from the Mall to Charing Cross will be opened.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The houses to be removed to secure the opening into Charing Cross will be in vacant possession of my Department this summer, and, subject to my obtaining the necessary funds to meet the cost, the work will be carried out as soon as possible afterwards.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Let us hope it will be before the Coronation.

Wren and Stokes Estate.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that some tenants (those of Ballynoneen) on the estate of Wren and Stokes, in Chancery since 1883, were evicted from their holdings in 1891, and allowed in as caretakers for three years; that at the end of this period they were obliged to sign proposals to the Court under the eleven months grazing system; and that some refused to sign, and had attachment orders got against them for contempt of Court; and whether the receiver had the authority of the Court in offering yearly tenancies on condition of paying fines.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The evictions were carried out by direction of the Court of Chancery. The tenants evicted were re-admitted as caretakers in respect of the houses, and as grazing tenants in respect of the lands. An attachment order, which has never been executed, was issued against one tenant only. In every case in which a yearly tenancy was created it was done with the sanction of the Court. No fines were taken from the tenants. Any payments made by them were on account of arrears of rent.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Did the Court endeavour to enforce the attachment order?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information on that point. I only have information that one attachment order was issued, but has never been executed.

Dublin Police—Statistics.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will

state the reason for the delay which annually takes place in publishing the statistical tables of the Dublin Metropolitan Police; and whether, having regard to the fact that similar statistics in connection with the city of Glasgow are published in February, he will secure an earlier publication of the Dublin statistics in future; also if he will cause to be inserted in the Report for 1901, and in all future Reports, the salaries paid to the chief commissioner, assistant commissioner, and other officers and men as set forth in the annual report of the chief constable of Glasgow, and also the sums contributed by the Corporation and Treasury respectively for the maintenance of the force.

MR. WYNDHAM: The police statistics for Dublin have been published annually about May. If it be possible to publish them earlier, this will be done. I cannot, however, give any undertaking in the matter. The information referred to in the second part of the Question is given in the Estimates which are yearly presented to Parliament.

MR. NANNETTI: Can the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph?

MR. WYNDHAM: The information will, I think, be found in the Estimates. I will consider if it can be given in a more convenient form.

Dromore Riots—Normoyle Case.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that in the prosecutions on Thursday for the rioting at Dromore, County Down, two of the witnesses failed to identify any of the accused, although they had previously made statements identifying the accused; (2) whether he is aware that in the Normoyle case the witnesses who declined to confirm their previous identification were committed to prison for contempt of court; and (3) will he explain why a similar course was not pursued in the Dromore case, and why the Dromore prosecutions were not conducted under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): At the request of my right hon. friend, I will reply to this Question. The witnesses in the Normoyle case were committed for contempt because, in the opinion of the presiding Justice, they were obviously prevaricating, swearing falsely, and trifling with their oaths. There is no foundation for the suggestion that the two witnesses in the Dromore prosecutions pointed at in the Question, namely, Mr. Wilson and Miss Whiteside, were guilty of misconduct of that kind. A bench of seven magistrates, including the resident magistrate, decided that, while a riot undoubtedly took place on the occasion, there was no evidence to implicate any of the persons accused. The proceedings were not taken under the Crimes Act, because there was no reason to believe that a jury could not be found in that county who would decide according to the evidence.

MR. MACVEAGH: How does the right hon. Gentleman arrive at the conclusion that this is justified because the jury could be relied on, in view of the fact that the case was not going before a jury at all, but before a packed bench of magistrates?

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member asked why were not the proceedings instituted under the Crimes Act. My answer was that justice could be obtained under the ordinary law.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the suggestion that these witnesses swore falsely was made by the Crown Solicitor at the trial?

Crime in County Cork.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the recent quarter sessions for the Macroom Division of the West Riding of Cork, County Court Judge Bird was presented with white gloves in consequence of there being no criminal business to transact, and that Millstreet rural district is included in this quarter sessions area; and, seeing that there is an absence of crime in the locality, can he explain on what grounds it was specially proclaimed under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must refer the hon. Member to the statement made by me on the 17th instant. To that statement I have nothing to add.

MR. SHEEHAN: May I point out that in the right hon. Gentleman's speech he gave no definite reasons for the proclamation of this district?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am content to rest it on the general arguments I advanced.

MR. SHEEHAN: But I want specific reasons.

Boycotting Returns.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any objection to issue a Return showing the distribution of the cases of total boycotting and partial boycotting in the districts proclaimed under Section 2 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. A Return giving this information will be laid on the Table.

Irish Fishery Industry.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many fishing boats have been built to the order of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland since its establishment, where built, and where the sails and general outfit were supplied from, and the cost of these boats; and were the sails and outfit for the fishing boat now building at Baltimore School made at Baltimore; and, if not, can he explain why this was not done.

MR. WYNDHAM: The information asked for could not very well be embodied in an answer to a Question, and I have, therefore, sent it direct to the hon. Member, who can give it what publicity he desires.

Ex-Sergeant Sheridan, R.I.C.

MR. P. A. M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sergeant Sheridan, a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary, whom the Chief Secretary has accused of manufacturing crime in Ireland, is still at large; and, if so, what steps, if any, have been taken by the Irish Government to bring this sergeant to trial.

MR. WYNDHAM: This matter was fully discussed in the statement made by me on the Appropriation Bill at the end of last session. To that statement I have nothing to add.

Liscannor Harbour.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what steps the Government are prepared to take with a view of making good Liscannor Harbour; and are the Government prepared to help the Kilrush Harbour Board in the manner asked by them to enable the Board to improve the entrance to that harbour.

MR. WYNDHAM: Negotiations are, I believe, proceeding between the County Council of Clare and the new Department in respect of Liscannor Harbour. I trust that some arrangement may be arrived at. I am also considering legislation which, if passed, will assist in placing certain fishery harbours in a more satisfactory position. But I cannot, at this stage, give pledges in respect of particular ports. In respect of Kilrush, the Board of Works are prepared to undertake certain improvements on conditions which have been communicated to the Urban District Council.

MAJOR JAMESON: In the event of anything being done, will this harbour be put under the County Council?

MR. WYNDHAM: I shall be prepared to go into the separate question of maintenance when I bring in my Bill.

Royal Irish Constabulary Pay and Allowances.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will publish the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the pay and allowances of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Report was laid on the Table yesterday.

Portumna Railway.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government offer of £12,000 to enable the reconstruction of the Portumna Railway will be available if a company finds the same amount of capital and undertakes to work the railway.

MR. WYNDHAM: The attitude of the Government in this matter was fully explained in the replies to Questions addressed to me last session. To these replies I am afraid I must refer the hon. Member.

Judicial Utterances in Ireland.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the observations of his Honour County Court Judge Moore, who, at Clonmel Quarter Sessions on Wednesday last, on the hearing of an application of Edward Burke for compensation for the burning of a farm, which was opposed by the Rural Council of Cloghen on behalf of the ratepayers, said that the people of Ardfinnan would not care if Burke as well as the house was burned; and whether, having regard to the effect upon the administration of justice of such language used from the bench, the Government propose to take any steps in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have submitted the Question to his Honour, in case he may desire to make any observations upon it. But, of course, he is under no obligation to this House, and I have no responsibility in the matter.

MR. CONDON: May I ask if there is no means by which such wholesale slander of our people can be stopped?

* MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Questions with regard to judicial proceedings must be asked in moderate terms.

MR. CONDON: I do not think our people ought to be slandered by judges or anyone else.

Ireland and the Corn Duties.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give for the year 1901, or for any previous year, the amount, approximately, of corn and grain imported into Ireland from foreign and colonial ports, either directly or after being transhipped or registered in Great Britain, and the same for flour; and if he will give the amount of Irish-grown corn, whether in grain or flour, shipped from Ireland; also the estimated amount of the Irish-grown corn used in the manufacture of the whiskey, beer, and porter shipped from Ireland.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The direct imports into Ireland were, grain, 16,294,030 cwts., flour, 2,386,610 cwts. The direct exports from Ireland were, grain, 137,142 cwts., flour (bran), 7,700 cwt. I cannot say what proportion was sent via Great Britain. Irish-grown grain is not separately distinguished in the Returns.

COLONEL NOLAN: Cannot you give me some information as to the last paragraph?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have none.

Irish Tenant Purchasers and the Income Tax.

MR. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that tenant purchasers under the Land Purchase Acts have income tax assessed under Schedule A on farms purchased under those Acts, and subject to annual instalments little less than the former rent; whether they are entitled to deduction from such assessment in respect of the annual interest which they pay on the purchase money; whether income tax is demanded on such farms even where the annual value is less than £160; and whether he will direct the Income Tax Commissioners to reduce the demands under Schedule A by the amount of interest as aforesaid, and not issue any demand note in cases where the net valuation so reduced is less than £160.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Farms purchased under the Land Purchase Acts are, like all other land in Ireland, liable to assessment to income tax (Schedule A) on the basis of the Poor Law Valuation; but the tenant is in practice allowed a reduction of the assessment by the amount of the annual interest which he pays on the purchase money. Income tax would be assessed on a farm of which the annual value is less than £160, but the assessment would be discharged if the tenant should establish his title to exemption on the ground that his total income from all sources is less than £160 per annum.

Fastnet Lighthouse.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the order for the lenticular apparatus for the Fastnet Lighthouse has been given by the Commissioners of Irish Lights to Messrs. Chance, in accordance with the terms of their contract; and, if so, whether the consent of the Board of Trade to their so doing had previously been obtained.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The order for the lenticular apparatus for the Fastnet Lighthouse has been given by the Commissioners of Irish Lights to Messrs. Chance, in accordance with the terms of their contract, which has been approved by the Board of Trade.

Education Bill.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether in the event of the Education Bill before the House becoming Law, the managers of any voluntary school possessing an endowment would be allowed to retain that endowment and apply it to purposes similiar to those to be met by voluntary subscriptions, or whether such endowment would fall into the hands of the local education authority.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR; I do not think this Question can be answered in general terms. It would depend in each case on the special conditions attached to the trust money referred to

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Clause 13 of the Education Bill, as regards the expenses of an urban district council, will reduce the charge now payable by the owners or occupiers of agricultural land in respect of school rates; whether the expenses of a School Board at the present time are paid out of the poor rate, for which agricultural land, subject to the temporary provisions of the Agricultural Rates Act, is assessed at its full annual value; and whether the provision that the expenses of an urban district council, acting as the local education authority under the Bill, shall be paid as expenses incurred for the general purposes of the Public Health Acts, will limit the assessment of agricultural land to one-fourth of its annual value.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The principle of the Bill is to make education a part of the general local government expenditure; and the incidence of the rates for education will be, so far as possible, the same as that for local government expenditure. This will make no change as regards the charge for higher education in any district; and none with regard to elementary education in boroughs. It will make a change in the case of urban districts not being boroughs by extending the present exemption, and that exemption is from half to three-quarters in the case of agricultural land.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, after the adoption by a local authority of Part III. of the Education Bill, it will be competent for the managers of a public elementary school not provided by that authority to make a charge for rent for the use of the school buildings.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer to the hon. Gentleman's Question is in the negative.

Wrongful Dismissal of Teachers

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Commitee of Council on Education, whether, in pursuance of his

pledges given during the last two sessions, the Government will bring in a Bill giving the right of appeal to teachers of public elementary schools in cases of alleged wrongful dismissal; or whether the Government would introduce a clause securing this advantage to the teachers in their Education Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This subject, no doubt, in some form or other will be raised in Committee on the Education Bill, and any answer now would therefore, I think, be premature.

Trusts.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the formation of trusts in this country; and whether, in view of the effects of this system in America, the Government will appoint a Commission to report upon the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I do not think the subject is at present ripe for the kind of inquiry which the hon. Gentleman desires.

National Expenditure.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Notice of Motion standing on the Order Paper for a Select Committee in respect of national expenditure†; and whether His Majesty's Government will consent to the appointment of such Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My attention has been called to the Notice of Motion standing in my hon. friend's name. I confess that I think the terms are too general to make such an inquiry possible, or, if it were held, fruitful. Whether it would be worth while having a Committee to inquire whether there might not be some better machinery than exists at present for criticising Departmental expenditure, is another point upon which I do not pronounce any opinion at the present moment.

† The following is the notice referred to:—MR. CHURCHILL: To draw attention to the growth of public burdens; and to move, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report whether National Expenditure cannot be diminished without injury to the public service, and whether the moneys voted cannot be apportioned to better advantage than at present.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Am I to understand that my right hon. friend is not hostile to the principle of something being done in this direction; and that supposing the proposition is put forward with a narrower reference the Government will be prepared to consider it in a favourable light?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that probably the more prudent course would be to wait until I see the Motion of my hon. friend before giving an answer.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman give some indication to the House of what he is prepared to do?

[No answer was returned.]

Royal Patriotic Commission.

MR. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the proposals which the Government have promised to make for the dissolution of the Royal Patriotic Commission and for transferring the administration of the various funds now vested in the Commissioners to the Navy and Military Pension Board, as recommended unanimously by the Joint Select Committee of the Lords and Commons last session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The plan which I think would be the best to adopt with regard to the matter in which the hon. Gentleman has shown himself persistently so much interested would be to frame a general central council representing the chief local authorities in the kingdom, and which should include a certain number of persons appointed by the Crown to represent the two great services and the authorities distributing Government pensions. The council so constituted could only act through an administrative and financial Committee. By this machinery we hope, not only to provide a body competent to allocate the funds of the Royal Patriotic Commission, but also one which shall be in close touch with the Government pension authorities on one side and with the local charity organisations throughout the country on the other. As the hon. Gentleman is aware, legislation will be required in

order to transfer the property of the Royal Patriotic Commission to the new council.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): Do the Government propose to introduce legislation immediately?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think probably legislation ought to be introduced in the course of the present session. But, of course, I can give no pledge on that subject.

Crofts in the Island of Lewis and in Ross-shire.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Deer Forest Commissioners state at page 10 of their Report, dated 19th March, 1895, that any scheme that would result in affording cottars the opportunity of obtaining crofts such as presently exist would operate a substantial relief both to the cottars themselves and to the neighbouring crofters; and will he explain why no scheme such as that indicated has at present been evolved to meet the requirements of the cottars in the Island of Lewis and on the mainland of Ross-shire.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that it has not yet been found possible to frame a scheme for this district.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this question of crofts is especially referred to in the Report? Will the right hon. Gentleman read and study the Report?

[No answer was returned.]

New Rules of Procedure.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in order to prevent interference with existing public engagements of Members in the Metropolis and the country, he will arrange that the new Rules relating to the Sittings of the House shall only take effect after Whitsuntide.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that on the whole the course suggested by the hon. Member would be for the general convenience of the House.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—MARTIAL LAW—DETENTION OF MR. CARTWRIGHT.

[MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.]

(4.30.) Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Member for the Montrose District, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the compulsory detention of Mr. Cartwright in Cape Town without charge brought, and for indefinite length of time." But the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen,

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Mr. Speaker, I make no apology to the House for this interruption of public business, because the matter to which I must draw their attention is one which involves, in the first place, extreme hardship to an individual, and in the second place, a gross and flagrant violation of the legal and constitutional principles of which this House is the guardian and the champion. I will venture to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to dissociate the matter to which I am drawing attention from any views as to the right or the wrong of either the policy or the methods of the war. Those have nothing whatever to do with the case which I wish to raise. The story is very short, very plain, and very simple. Mr. Cartwright was indicted in the ordinary way before an ordinary court in Cape Town for a defamatory and seditious libel, was tried before a judge and jury, and was convicted, and sentenced to undergo one year's imprisonment. That year of imprisonment terminated, as the right hon. Gentleman has just told the House, I think, on Tuesday. Upon all that part of the matter I have no comment whatever to make. It does not come within the scope of the subject to which I am drawing attention. About two months ago—I think in February—Mr. Cartwright sent in a written application to the authorities in the Cape Colony for information whether upon the expiry of his sentence he would be allowed

to travel. He gave two reasons for desiring this permission to leave Cape Colony and come to England. One reason was that he had been in the doctor's hands, so he alleges, for some time, and that his health required the change to England; and the second reason was that he had no chance whatever of earning his livelihood as a journalist, for there was no opening for him in Cape Colony, and therefore his only chance was to come here; and I may add further, that he stated that he was willing to show to the authorities a *bonâ fide* engagement for doing work of a purely non-political character in this country. Well, Mr. Cartwright upon this received a refusal. No reason was given for this refusal. No charge was made or indicated. He was simply told that he would not be allowed to travel—that is to say, not allowed to leave South Africa. The House will observe that by this proceeding, by this refusal of the authorities, they took upon themselves to make an enormous and unmeasured extension of Mr. Cartwright's legal penalty. A legal penalty had been imposed upon him, but he had undergone it. His offence was purged, and no additional offence could have been committed by him because, of course, he was in confinement. He was then by this refusal called upon to undergo a further penalty—namely, a compulsory detention in Cape Town, and the prevention of his performing his ordinary avocations. As the Secretary of State told us two or three nights ago, he is now a free man. But in what sense free? He is free to walk about in Cape Town, under supervision, as the right hon. Gentleman said. Therefore I submit that, so far as that goes, the authorities in Cape Town, whose action is endorsed by the Secretary of State, have extended, without any law or intention to appeal to law, a legal penalty.

Upon this state of facts, I put a Question to the Secretary of State for War on April 14th, and I received, not from him, because he was unfortunately not present, but from the noble Lord, the Financial Secretary, in those unfaltering accents which make him a sort of impersonation of martial law—I received from him, I think, the most outrageous and indefensible answer ever given within these walls since Simon de Montfort invented Parliament. I will read the noble Lord's answer—

> "The authorities in South Africa," he said, "did not consider it desirable to grant Mr. Cartwright permission to proceed to England. His views, as the right hon. Gentleman was probably aware"—

I do not know why I should be aware of his views—

> "were strongly anti-British, and it was not deemed desirable by the authorities in South Africa to increase the number of persons in this country who disseminated anti-British propaganda."

The House will observe there is no word said about the military necessities or about anything indeed in South Africa. It is the dissemination of anti-British views in Great Britain. Now I might put a question to the Secretary of State, and I might invite him to tell me first what he understands the authorities in South Africa to mean by anti-British views. I suppose they mean, and can mean, nothing else than views which are not palatable to his Majesty's Government. Therefore Mr. Cartwright is kept in exile—because it comes to that—by the arbitrary action of the military authorities, because he might disseminate views unfavourable to His Majesty's Government in this country. Now I will put another point to the right hon. Gentleman. Supposing Mr. Cartwright holds obnoxious anti-British views—whatever anti-British may mean—will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to tell us where on earth the dissemination of anti-British views could be so entirely harmless as in Great Britain? If they prevented Mr. Cartwright from going to Berlin, or Paris, or The Hague, there might be something to be said for it; but he is not to be allowed to come to Great Britain, where, if anywhere, surely there are enough British views to outweigh the addition of one single individual to those who are alleged to disseminate anti-British propaganda. The one country, therefore, to which he cannot come is the country where we all know he would not do one atom or scintilla of harm of any kind, I say, not only is the action illegal, unconstitutional, tyrannical, and arbitrary, but it is, on the face of it, impudently absurd and preposterous. I thought I would try

my fortune with the Secretary of State himself, and he said just now, not perhaps with his ordinary suavity, that he had already told me the grounds on which Mr. Cartwright had been refused permission to leave Cape Town, and that he would not tell me again.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I merely said that I had already explained to the right hon. Gentleman, and that if he wished me to repeat my explanation I would do so.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman did not take quite the position taken by the noble Lord. He said—

"If any sufficient undertaking can be given as to Mr. Cartwright's conduct in the event of his leaving South Africa, I will communicate with Lord Kitchener with a view to re-considering his case."

Sir, there is no case for either Lord Kitchener or the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider. But he went on to say a little more. I asked him if he would kindly tell me what kind of conduct would justify detention and what kind of undertaking to abstain from such conduct would justify a release. Then the Secretary of State said—

"I should regard an understanding to avoid the course and conduct which Mr. Cartwright has been pursuing for some time past as probably a satisfactory one."

Then he said further that the military authorities thought some means ought to be resorted to for preventing the pursuance of the libellous action on the part of Mr. Cartwright, either in South Africa or in this country, which had led to his present situation. Prevent a pursuance of the same libellous action! Avoid a course of conduct which had led to his present situation! What was the course of conduct which had led to his present situation? It was a libellous action, and he was punished for it; and, therefore, I ask the right hon. Gentleman how does he suppose that there are no other means of preventing Mr. Cartwright from pursuing a course of libellous action, which is not quite the same thing, by the way, as disseminating anti-British propaganda. Are there no other means than preventing him coming to this country and earning his living? Surely you already found that in Cape Colony you could punish him, and you did punish him. Supposing he comes to this country, is there no law against libel here? On the Secretary of State's own words the thing is entirely absurd. They are not detaining Mr. Cartwright because of his libellous action; they are detaining him for some other reasons which they do not disclose, and I invite the right hon. Gentleman to inform us frankly and fully why it is they are pursuing this extraordinary course. When anything is done under martial law—and these proceedings are under martial law, I presume—the case is apparently regarded as stopped. Our mouths are closed and our lips are sealed. There is to be no present inquiry, no examination. But I submit that that is exactly the opposite of the truth. Have martial law if you like, but all the more because you have martial law must you be prepared to justify and defend what is done.

In this case, what kind of right have the Secretary of State and his military authorities to detain this man, who has undergone his sentence, and who ought now to be as free as I am? I see the Attorney General there, I wonder what his view is on the legal aspect of this matter. I wonder whether he would say that the language I have read out of the Secretary of State that the noble Lord shows a shadow of a pretext for the detention of this man. By right, reason, and commonsense, Mr. Cartwright ought to be perfectly free, and I for one say boldly here, in spite of all the martial law atmosphere in which we now live, that I wholly demur to their right to exact any undertaking whatever from Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Cartwright expressed his willingness and pledged himself—at all events he gave a *bonâ fide* engagement—that he would do no political work in this country, but speaking here as a Member of this House, though Mr. Cartwright may do whatever he thinks proper, I demur wholly to the right of the Secretary of State and the military authorities to exact any undertaking whatever. I wholly repudiate the position which underlies the remarkable answer of the noble Lord the other night in regard to this matter.

I deny that even that constitutes any ground whatever for depriving him of his full civil rights.

I have only one sentence more to say. I am certainly not going to argue the philosophy or legal details of martial law, but I would like to read what was said within the walls of this House by two eminent men in the year 1867. It seems to me to place in two or three sentences the whole position and character of martial law in an absolutely incontrovertible light. The first sentence or two are from Mr. Mill. He said—

"Although there was no such thing as martial law except for military purposes there was a law of necessity. There may be a public necessity in case of rebellion requiring that certain acts not justified by the law of the country should be done, but these acts should be acts of suppression, not of punishment."

The other sentences are those of Mr. Cardwell, a man of strong, firm, and clear head. These are his words, and I commend them to the attention of the House—

"A man was justified in taking the law into his own hands for the purpose of protecting his life when threatened by any extraordinary or sudden violence."

So with regard to martial law. The principle equally applied. Necessity was the true test. In the memorable words of Sir James Mackintosh—

"To continue to act upon a supposed necessity after the necessity had expired was an enormous crime."

That was the view which was held in this House in 1867. I cannot believe now, that apart from all the heat of the politics of the hour, I cannot believe that in their sober judgment Gentlemen in any quarter of the House will take any other view, or will think it an unimportant thing that an invasion of personal right may take place under martial law; nor can I believe that anybody in this House supposes for one instant in this case anything like military necessity or danger to social order has been made out. It is really a wanton, arbitrary, tyrannical, and absurd proceeding.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

(4.50.) MR. BRODRICK: I must say that I am somewhat surprised at the heat which the right hon. Gentleman has displayed in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman has brought before the House a series of constitutional propositions into some of which I do not propose to follow him, but he has done so in respect of one particular action of the military authorities in South Africa, and he himself, in the terms of the Motion which he has submitted for the adjournment of the House, has specially alluded to the fact that what he complains of is that Mr. Cartwright should have been detained without charge brought, and for an indefinite length of time. Now, Sir, what are the facts as to the indefinite length of time? Mr. Cartwright, I presume, was due to be let out of prison on Tuesday last—two days ago—and because on Thursday—the communications which have been passing have not yet been completed—I am not yet able to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman that Mr. Cartwright's undertaking will be accepted, the right hon. Gentleman moves that adjournment of the House. I undertook two or three days ago to communicate with Lord Kitchener with regard to the undertaking which Mr. Cartwright gave. I will meet the right hon. Gentleman on the question of that undertaking directly, but at all events I undertook to communicate with Lord Kitchener, and I have done so. I have not yet got Lord Kitchener's reply, and, because for two days we are still in doubt as to what the issue may be, the right hon. Gentleman interrupts the whole business of Parliament in order to call attention to Mr. Cartwright's detention in South Africa for an indefinite length of time. That I venture to suggest to the House shows that the right hon. Gentleman has been more anxious to challenge the administration of martial law in South Africa than to bring his particular case and the hardship of it before the House.

The right hon. Gentleman has asked this question—What do we mean in Mr. Cartwright's case by accusing him of the intention of disseminating anti-British propaganda after he has left South Africa? He answered that question himself by saying that what we are afraid of is that Mr. Cartwright may express views which are not palatable

to the Government. The right hon. Gentleman is, I suppose, aware of the reasons which caused Mr. Cartwright to be committed to prison. He was the editor of the *South African News*, a paper which has come unfavourably before the authorities on several occasions. [Laughter.] It is all very well for hon. Members simply to laugh here about statements circulated in South Africa among the inhabitants of Cape Colony for the very purpose of raising further rebellion against the Crown, and which are communicated, not merely to British subjects in Cape Colony, but also to the Boers, and so far as they can reach to people on the continent of Europe, as representing the facts of the carrying on of the campaign in South Africa. What was the particular paragraph and the particular provocation in the *South African News* for which Mr. Cartwright was condemned? On 6th February, 1901, Mr. Cartwright was guilty of what I think is the greatest crime from the journalistic point of view that a British subject can well be accused of. He published in the *South African News* a statement headed—

"How we are waging war. A dreadful disclosure. Lord Kitchener's secret instructions."

and then follows—

"Lord Kitchener having, as he thought, caged his enemy, sent secret instructions to the troops to take no prisoners, that is, if the Boers surrounded on all sides found themselves unable to resist and hoisted the white flag as a token of surrender, they were to be shot down to the last man."

Then there follows this, professing to come from an officer. Whether any person, having any title to be called an officer ever communicated to the *South African News* we know not, but that it was an absolute and outrageous falsehood is well known. This "officer" said—

"I received the order personally from a General of the highest rank, holding one of the first positions in South Africa. The order was repeated twice, so that there might be no mistake. I found that all the other senior officers were aware of the order. What their private opinions and intentions were I do not know, but I heard no word of condemnation."

Well, Sir, that is an attempt, not merely to charge Lord Kitchener and the highest authorities of the British Army, but all the senior officers engaged in that particular operation, with a grave military crime, with the intention of taking action, which from every standpoint would be abhorrent to the feelings of the people of this country. That would be admirably calculated to increase the violence of opinion between the two combatants, and was framed absolutely and solely for the purpose of damaging the British troops.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I ask the Secretary of State whether that letter was not published in *The Times* in London also.

MR. BRODRICK: I have no knowledge of this publication in *The Times*. I am speaking only of what took place in South Africa. At all events the point I have in view in reading that extract is to show what I believe was not contested, that this journal was acting for the sole purpose of increasing the anti-British feeling in South Africa, and it was because of the seditious libel that Mr. Cartwright was put in prison. The right hon. Gentleman had an eloquent passage at the close of his observations, in which he spoke of the iniquity of using martial law for anything beyond necessity, or the supposed necessity of martial law. He asked the House whether there was any position in which Mr. Cartwright could do less damage to this country than by disseminating anti-British propaganda in this country. I do not know whether there is any position in which he can be of less danger, but I am perfectly certain that it would be less danger if he is not in a position to disseminate any anti-British propaganda at all. I confess I am astonished at the violence with which those who profess to desire a peace policy and a fruitful issue of the present negotiations attack the Government if they do not let loose all those whose writings and actions tend to the prolongation of the war. Mr. Cartwright knows well the palate for which he has to cater. Men like him, having channels of communication with Cape Colony, may undoubtedly exercise a very considerable effect on the minds of the Boers by producing as facts, when they may be entire fictions, like his previous writings from this country, the very arguments which will suggest to the Boers to ask for terms which it is not possible for His Majesty's Government to consider. I know that hon. Members opposite do not believe that speeches or

writings in this country have any serious effect on the war. I can only say that by the very last mail I received the translation of an extract from *The Government Gazette of the Orange Free State*, the official publication of the defunct Boer Government, dated 25th January of this very year, and containing a somewhat Bowdlerised edition of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition delivered, I think, at Plymouth in December last. I am not going to trouble the House with that speech. Every word of it justifies my contention that these speeches are treasured, prized, and circulated by the Boer leaders for the sole purpose of getting those of their followers who are getting weary of the war and despairing of the result to continue in the field.

As between the right hon. Gentleman and the Government there is no very wide margin. The right hon. Gentleman contends that Mr. Cartwright has completed his sentence and has a right to go free without any stipulation whatever, whereas, in all cases of martial law it is in the power, a power which has been exercised by the authorities, and rightly and judiciously exercised, to assign in some cases a place of residence to those whose actions lay them open to suspicion and which may be of damage to the State, and whom they do not desire to retain in gaol. The most that can be said of the action with regard to Mr. Cartwright is that the Military Authorities have thought it desirable to assign him such a place of residence for a certain period. [Several HON. MEMBERS: What period?] So far as I know, he is limited to Cape Town. What I suggest to the House is this—that this Motion, which we are ready to meet on its merits, is also entirely premature. We have asked for stipulations on Mr. Cartwright's part, undertakings as to his conduct if he is sent to this country. The result is not yet known to us. Until it is, I cannot undertake to overrule the opinion of the authorities in South Africa. We have the strongest possible grounds at all times for avoiding that which may add to our present difficulty in South Africa, and we should, I think, be criminally guilty if we were not specially careful at the present moment as to taking action which might in many cases lead to the indefinite prolongation of the struggle. Having regard to the facts that this question is still *sub judice*, that we have pronounced no final opinion upon it, that we have made communications in the sense of the terms which reached us from the right hon. Gentleman, and that these have not yet been answered, I suggest that on every ground it is undesirable to endeavour to force to do that which they will not do—namely, without consultation with the authorities in South Africa, to issue an edict which might have a far-reaching effect on other cases; while the suspension of the question for a few days will certainly not injure the interests of the individual whom it is the object of the right hon. Gentleman to serve.

*(5.5.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): What does the right hon. Gentleman mean by saying that this question is *sub judice?* Who are the judges? Neither the Secretary of State nor the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa has anything to say as to what a British subject shall do in this country. If any man on that bench or any of the supporters of the Government are going to maintain that martial law exists in South Africa, that is one thing, and there, when martial law exists, you may determine what is to be done there. But for Lord Kitchener and the right hon. Gentleman to undertake to determine between themselves what shall be done, and upon what conditions a man shall act when he comes to this country—is contrary to the constitution. I could not believe it possible that in the twentieth century, from the Constitutional party, we should hear that martial law is not to be confined even to South Africa—that it is for Lord Kitchener, under martial law, to determine what is to be the conduct of a British subject in this British land. What is the meaning of this communication which is going on between the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa as to the terms upon which Mr. Cartwright is to be allowed to return to England and as to his conduct when in England? Why, Sir, if he comes here and he does anything which is contrary to British law or contrary to British interest, he is subject to be restrained and punished here under British law. He is not to be governed by

a bargain enforced upon him by threats of imprisonment, not on account of any danger there. A place is to be assigned to him, and the place is Cape Town, where, as I understand the right hon. Gentleman, he is to be allowed to be free. Then he is not a very dangerous man there. But he is not to be free if he comes to this country. What is this? We have heard of the banishment of the Boer leaders; but this is a power assumed by the right hon. Gentleman and the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, to banish a man from British soil, a principle of banishment, not on account of the mischief he may do at the Cape, but on account of the mischief that he may do when he comes here. What has the right hon. Gentleman to say to that? He has no business to make himself the judge as to the danger of a man's conduct here. You must judge him by the law of the land. Why, Sir, on the part of the Executive—I am not desirous of using in this House unnecessarily strong language, but I say this is an impudent pretension. It is necessary to the freedom of this country, the security for all our liberties is, that whilst the law is suspended for the moment in South Africa, men in the position of the Secretary of State should not determine upon what conditions a man shall live in this country, what he should say, and what he should do.

It is said that the raising of this question is premature. It is not premature at all. The very moment that such a doctrine as this is stated in this House of Commons it should be instantly denounced and repudiated. It was not necessary to wait even for the expiration of the sentence. The doctrine was propounded weeks ago, in contemplation of the expiration of the sentence, and I do not care whether you take the blunt language of the noble Lord, or whether you take the unconstitutional language of the Secretary of State, it is our business to denounce it, it is our business to make it clear that a pretension of that kind is the destruction of the liberties of every Englishman. It is putting the clock back 200 years for the Executive Government to pretend to determine the legality or the propriety of the conduct of British subjects here. You may say at elections, if you like, that every vote given against the Government is a vote for the Boers. But you do not dare to prevent men from coming to this country on that account. I say, Sir, it is a scandal that such language as that should have been heard from that bench. It is contrary to every principle on which the elementary liberties of every British subject depend that the right hon. Gentleman and Lord Kitchener should be carrying on correspondence and communications as to the conditions to be imposed upon a man, not for anything he is to do out there, not in regard to any danger in South Africa, where the war is carried on, but in consideration of a speculation of what he may do if he comes to this country. It is a monstrous and scandalous thing that such a doctrine should ever have been uttered in the House of Commons.

*(5.14.) SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Stafford, Handsworth): I think my constituents would wish me to sav one word on this subject. I believe their opinion is that we sent Lord Kitchener to South Africa to finish the war. In order that he might be free from the intricacies and delays of the ordinary law, we armed him with the powers of martial law, and we consider that if he did not use these powers to the best of his judgment he would be a traitor to his country. In all matters concerning the war, and the conduct of affairs in South Africa relating to the war, we are prepared to support the judgment of Lord Kitchener against the whole of the Opposition..

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I do not think that that is a fair statement, as many of us on this side of the House are quite as anxious as any hon. Members opposite can be to see Lord Kitchener bring the war to an end, and to give him whatever powers may be necessary for that purpose. I strongly repudiate the attitude which the Secretary of State for War has taken up on this subject. I should like to point out that from the military point of view martial law goes so far that a man may be tried by court martial and may be condemned, but that when he has served his sentence, even in the field, he becomes free, in the sense which is understood by every civilised country. The Secretary of State said he might be kept in prison. It is true you may keep

anybody in prison under martial law, but not under the sentence of the court martial, because the man has served his sentence. Then it was said he was not in prison indefinitely, but that he is not allowed to go abroad for some period which is not stated. If that is not indefinitely, I do not know what "indefinitely" is; and I say there is no right to put a restriction on his liberty for an undefined period.

(5.18.) MR. ELLIOT (Durham): It appears to me that the House of Commons has a very important duty cast upon it by what has taken place this evening. My right hon. friend seems to have mistaken the issue he had to try. Our duty here is to consider the charge brought against this man. I know nothing about Mr. Cartwright, and for my part I fully believe that he deserved the sentence which has been passed upon him, and I think he might even have deserved a severer punishment; but, that, Sir, is not the question. I feel that if I had to decide on the merits or demerits of his original offence I could not give an honest verdict in his favour until I had heard the speeches made on his behalf as well as those made against him. I know not how badly Mr. Cartwright behaved. I know nothing about Mr. Cartwright; but be he what he may, he is at least a British subject. He is a fellow citizen of every one of us here, and he stands, and has a right to stand, upon his rights before the law. He has those rights by virtue of the Constitution, and I say those rights have been denied him. Sir, this is a very painful case. It is a case that ought not to have come before us in its present condition. What is the case? It is that the man Cartwright, who has served his sentence, is still being detained in South Africa. When the time comes when a criminal, who has been tried by a judge and convicted, walks out of gaol, he walks out a free man. That is exactly Cartwright's position. I am reminded that martial law remains absolute throughout South Africa. No doubt that gives the military authority in that country power to do what they please in South Africa, and there is no application anywhere except to the House of Commons. And the House of Commons is bound to see that men's just rights are protected, even though those men are in a country which is subjected—and properly, in my opinion—to martial law. Now, what is it that Mr. Cartwright wants to do and is prevented from doing? If Mr. Cartwright proposed to travel through all South Africa and make inflammatory speeches, or proposed to start a newspaper again in South Africa, I could quite understand Lord Kitchener being perfectly justified, as the guardian of British interests out there, in preventing him from acting in that way—not by virtue of the sentence passed on Cartwright, but by virtue of the martial law that prevails. But what we are told today—and it has not been contradicted — is that Mr. Cartwright claimed to come home to England, and it is actually asserted on this side of the House that it was perfectly competent for the military authorities to deny his right to come to England, because of the danger his actions in England would entail. If ever there was a case in which there were not two sides to the argument, it is this. I repudiate altogether the suggestion that those who intervene in favour of the Constitution, of British law and liberty, are to be in any way taken as supporting the cause of the enemies of Great Britain. I am as anxious as the Secretary for War is, and more than that I cannot say, that our arms should quickly prevail in South Africa, and that the war should be rapidly brought to a victorious close. But I also have regard for British rights and liberties, and I maintain that the House of Commons has a duty upon it, apart and separate from the duty of the Executive Government. It has been said that the House of Commons has sunk in the estimation of the people, a statement I do not believe, but the House will lose respect if it refuses to stand up against any attack on the rights of Englishmen under the Constitution.

(5.25.) EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): The right hon. Gentleman said he never heard a subject in this House on which there was less argument on one side. I believe there is a great deal to be said in favour of that view of the question which we on this side of the House support. I agree with my hon. friend behind me that all

of us are anxious to finish the war, and that everything that is necessary should be done in order to finish the war, and I believe that martial law is necessary in South Africa, but I do not agree that we are to form our own opinions as to whether Mr. Cartwright's views had a more evil influence on events in South Africa, according to whether they were published there or in this country. It appears to me that if we allow martial law in South Africa we must give due weight to the opinion of Lord Kitchener as to the effect of such publications. If this case of Mr. Cartwright had any reference to the civil liberties and privileges of an Englishman in this country, then certainly every man who values those liberties or is loyal in his duty to the House of Commons ought to protest against what has been done. But I draw a very different conclusion from the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, who attacks the Government on two grounds. He says that the military authorities have no right to prevent Mr. Cartwright from coming to this country after the expiration of his term of imprisonment, and that Lord Kitchener had no right to exact from Mr. Cartwright an undertaking as to the course of conduct he would pursue if he did come. I think the first of these arguments has been effectually disposed of by the Secretary of State, who pointed out how over and over again in the past people who fulfilled their terms of punishment in South Africa have been assigned a fixed place of residence, and have been prevented from travelling. Lord Kitchener had a right to say to Mr. Cartwright—"You may remain in South Africa, where you can do no harm, but you shall not go to England." Why is it a greater invasion of liberty to say, "You shall not leave South Africa to go to England," than to say, "You shall not leave Cape Town and go to the Orange Colony"? There is no difference between the two positions. Then it is said that the military authorities have no right to exact an undertaking from Mr. Cartwright as to his course of conduct. From what I have heard I understand Mr. Cartwright volunteered an undertaking.

Earl Percy.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I may say—though my information is at second-hand—that in his letter of application Mr. Cartwright expressed his willingness to show to the authorities a *bonâ fide* engagement for non-political work in England.

EARL PERCY: That comes to very much the same thing as willingness to give an undertaking. Apparently he was prepared to give an undertaking as to the course he would pursue if he came to this country. I admit I think it does seem rather questionable, though it is perfectly legitimate, but whether it was judicious or wise is a different matter. The conclusion I draw from the argument of the right hon. Gentleman is that he would have been better advised if he had endorsed the action of Lord Kitchener in prohibiting Mr. Cartwright from leaving South Africa, and when the war is over, or when he thought Mr. Cartwright's presence in this country would be attended by no kind of danger—on which I express no opinion—he should be allowed to return without any stipulation whatever.

*(5.30.) MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): The general importance of this matter infinitely transcends the circumstances of this particular case, but, even taking the circumstances of this particular case, they appear to me to demonstrate the absolute folly of the course which has been taken, and is now being pursued. The circumstances are these. There was published in *The Times* newspaper, some three weeks before its re-publication by Mr. Cartwright in his paper at Cape Town, a letter, purporting to be from a British officer. No action was taken by the authorities responsible for the preservation of law and order in free England against *The Times* newspaper, that most influential journal, for the publication of that which, if it was a seditious libel in Cape Town, was a seditious libel in London. I do not complain of the appeal to the law in Cape Town, and the neglect to appeal to the law here; but I argue that the neglect to appeal to the law here was due to the view, reasonably entertained, that whatever might be the necessity

of appealing to the law in Cape Town, there was no necessity to do so here. I apply that proposition to the exigencies of today. We have had shown by the action there, and the inaction here, the relative dangers, in the view of the authorities, of the publication of seditious libels in Africa and in England. We have had it shown—and I am glad for the honour of this country that, however far, in the view of the Executive, we may have descended even in a twelvemonth—that, at any rate, at that time it was thought not dangerous to England, or injurious to the progress of the war, that *The Times* should publish something of this kind without being prosecuted for seditious libel. But if that be so, what is the answer, in the circumstances of this particular case, to be made to the suggestion of my hon. friend, that there is no danger in allowing a freeborn Englishman to return to free England, and there, subject to the exigencies of the law and the limitations of the general law to which we are all amenable, to say the thing he will? The facts of the particular case have thus demonstrated the truth of my right hon. friend's proposition. It is absurd to suggest that there is danger here so great as to excuse this extraordinary invasion of the rights of an Englishman.

Another point is this—What are the deliberations about? What is it that is *sub judice*? Up to now, I had believed that it was by the law and the courts that an Englishman's rights in England were ruled, but the right hon. Gentleman opposite seems to think that Lord Kitchener and the Secretary of State for War are the judges who are to decide on these rights. What is it they are determining? Just look at the absolute folly of the whole business. They are determining what letters of limitation of his rights Mr. Cartwright is to sign, what solemn obligations—I know not whether under seal, or signed with his blood—he is to enter into, as the price of his coming back to England! Then when he comes here—is there law here yet? Would he break the law if he breaks that obligation? No; he cannot be punished here if he breaks that obligation. He can be punished here, thank God—unless we are to have such judges as have been set up tonight—only if, and when he breaks the common equal laws of the land. But manacles are to be put upon him; his tongue is to be gagged; gyves are to be put upon his hands by his honourable obligation. I am glad of the certificate of character so far given to Mr. Cartwright, that the Government believe they can trust that honourable obligation. They know it does not stand in law, but they believe they can trust his honourable obligation—which I have no doubt he will observe—by which he, amongst the 40,000,000 inhabitants of these islands, will be the only Englishman marked by the inability and the incapacity to say or write the thing he will, subject only to the responsibilities and liabilities common to us all. This is a very serious matter. I have never here dilated, and certainly I am not going now to dilate on the war and its effects. I have thought, however, that amongst its effects, has been a very great deterioration in the moral sense, in the love of liberty, in the determination to risk the inconveniences, and to expose one's self to the troubles that have sometimes to be borne in pursuit, defence, and preservation of the rights of free-born Englishmen, and of that deterioration the defence of this day is proof.

Now we hear in the House of Commons the suggestion that martial law, forsooth, is to be such a capricious and uncertain element of power, that the urgent necessity of the case, which is the only defence for the exercise of martial law, is to be construed so widely as to allow the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa to judge of the tone and temper of the British people, of British interests abroad, or of Imperial interests outside South Africa; and on his conception of these topics to banish from England an Englishman, and to retain him in South Africa. That seems to me to be the most extraordinary extension of all the doctrines of martial law of which I ever heard. Consider it for a moment. The noble Lord says that while a man is in the area in which martial law has been set up, his liberty may be restrained. Of course it may on the ground of majority. But the very fact that his liberty may be arbitrarily restrained, is a reason why every Englishman, and, most of all, every Member of the English House of Commons, should look upon the imposition of martial law as an odious necessity, and jealously scrutinise every single act done under its pretence. The man may

be restrained. It is possible to restrain him in jail, or within the limits of Cape Town, if you please. But that is because it is alleged to be of the necessity of the case there, in the theatre of war. But to say that a man whose offence, which has been expiated by this twelve months sentence, was committed when martial law did not obtain, and who it is not pretended has committed any other offence, is to be prevented from coming to England, his home 6,000 miles away from the theatre of war, unless he gives some undertaking, diminishing the rights he should enjoy in common with his 40,000,000 fellow Englishmen, is absolutely indefensible. It's a thing which, if I had still any hopes of this House, I should have thought they would this day repudiate.

(5.40.) MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I rise for the purpose of expressing to the House how greatly I differ from the view my noble friend the Member for Kensington has put forward, and my regret that one who so often delights this House with his eloquence and well-reasoned arguments should have committed himself to such a very bad position on this occasion. This is not a question of Party at all, it is a very great question arising from a very small incident in the course of the warfare in South Africa. It does not matter a row of buttons who Mr. Cartwright is. He may be a ruffian, perhaps he is. But he has been tried by a court martial for any offence he has committed?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): No: by a judge and a jury.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: He has been tried by a judge and jury; he had been found guilty; and South Africa is not an atmosphere, I imagine, in which a man would be likely to get less punishment than he deserved, although I am bound to say, in view of what the Secretary of State has read, Mr. Cartwright appears to have been lucky in the sentence he received; but, at any rate, he has served his sentence, and his offence is blotted out. There is no right or power in this country which allows the Home Government, in time of peace, to proceed against a man who has already served all that the law has a right to require of him. If there is no right, there is no reason. What reason has the Government to be afraid of Mr. Cartwright? There are many people in this country who spread what is called anti-British propaganda, but does that alter the opinion of the British people? Has it in any way impaired the security of the British Government? No Government has benefited so much by the strong support and opinions of the masses of the country as this Government. No Government has less right not to allow those masses to receive any opinion within the law which may be properly expressed to them. This is a great constitutional principle, and I should be very sorry indeed if it were thought by those outside who read the debates in this House that constitutional principles are valued and supported only by hon. Members opposite. There are some of us on this side of the House who are not prepared to see a great constitutional principle violated, not, I think, with any deliberate intent, but simply because those who administer the law have got used to an over exercise of power, and who, having overstepped themselves on this occasion, should be made by the due authority of this House to withdraw within the limits of the law.

(5.45.) MR BARTLEY (Islington, N.): We have heard tonight some speeches about great constitutional principles, but what does that really amount to? A man in South Africa has written a most scandalous article to incite his fellow countrymen against this country. He has been tried for it and punished, and it is said that that ends the matter. But I venture to say that we have another side to look at, and it is the fact that we are at war. What this man was doing and might do in the future it was thought by the authorities might lead to great harm, and so the Commander-in-Chief and Lord Milner think he is a man who should not be allowed to come to this country in order to make use of this country's platforms to sow and create dissent from the policy of the war. It is idle to talk about the rights of an Englishman in this way. [Nationalist cheers.] I hear great cheering from hon. Members from Ireland, but they are always elated at anything which is detrimental to this country. The rights of this individual, who has behaved in this scandalous manner, are as nothing compared to the rights of those persons in South Africa whom his conduct would tend to injure.

I do not always support the Government, but I say that in this matter they have taken a proper and a firm line. It is childish talking in this way, and getting Members of the Front Opposition Bench to father these various cases in order to make mischief. We have had a great deal too much of this lately. I say that, in spite of what this House does and what hon. Members do, the country is getting tired of this sort of thing. Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener, in the exercise of their high powers, have thought it desirable that this man should be kept where he is, and we are bound to support them in that action. It is quite possible that the Financial Secretary to the War Office did not give a very wise answer. Unfortunately it was, I think, an answer to a supplementary Question which he had not carefully prepared. [Opposition cries of "No, no."] Nevertheless, the fact remains that in a state of war we ought to support the men whom we trust in doing everything which they consider is necessary to conclude the war. Here is a man, judging from the nature of the extract from the article which has been read out, who has written something reflecting upon the British soldiers. [Cries of "No, no."] He published statements of a most scandalous and disgraceful character against honourable men who belong to this country, and after he was punished, so far from his punishment ending the matter, I say that Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener were bound to see that that man's actions afterwards did not tend to prolong the war or injure the cause which they had at heart.

I think we are now becoming so extraordinarily mild to our enemies, and bitter and hostile to our friends, that there seems to be delight whenever you can hold up a plausible case of any sort to turn against our own people. This does seem an extraordinary position for this country to come to, and if there is one thing that degrades this House in the eyes of the public, it is that we are so fond of doing this sort of thing. I am sorry for it, because the great bulk of the people support this war, and they believe that it is not being carried out as vigorously as it should be, but they are supporting the Government in it, and I am glad that the Government have acted in the way they have in this matter. I trust that they will put even more backbone into their policy and their methods. We should consider in every respect that the men we trust out in South Africa are doing the best for us, and we ought not to be so fond of these debates, which are telegraphed over to the enemy, and it is no good saying that they do no harm, because one of the speeches of the Leader of the Opposition was reproduced and circulated in South Africa. I say that by this course we are injuring the country, and I am certain that the British public are getting rather tired of it. I sincerely trust that we shall not see any more of these scenes, but that we shall support those in South Africa who are doing their utmost to carry out the great duty which we have entrusted to them. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: 'Why not send you out?"]

MR. WALLACE (Perth): I desire to repudiate altogether the contention that those who support this Motion are acting in a factious spirit and hostile to their country because they venture to support a great constitutional principle. In regard to matters of this kind we are not prepared to sacrifice this great principle even for the sake of supporting the policy of the Government in South Africa. The noble Lord opposite who spoke in favour of this Motion said that he could discover no difference whatever between the action of Lord Kitchener in refusing to allow a man to leave Cape Town and go to the Orange Free State and refusing to allow him to leave the Cape and come home. The noble Lord might have at on e perceived the difference We have martial law prevailing in South Africa, but it does not prevail in this country, and whether it is properly proclaimed or not in South Africa, the fact that it exists there would allow Lord Kitchener to exercise his powers there, but he would have no right to extend his powers over any British subject when he comes over here.

I have risen to protest against this new doctrine. For the purposes of this discussion I assume that Mr. Cartwright deserved all he got, and I assume from the nature of the article which has been read out that he ought to have been punished. He has, I understand, suffered his punishment. Having suffered his

punishment, Mr. Cartwright proposes to come back to this country, and we are told that it is within the power of the Secretary of State for War or Lord Kitchener to impose conditions on a British subject when he returns to this country. A more dangerous doctrine has never been enunciated by any Minister, and I feel it my duty to strongly protest against it. If Mr. Cartwright, when he returns here, breaks the pledges he has given, there is no power whatever to punish him for so doing. The law here can take no cognisance of this undertaking, but if Mr. Cartwright comes to this country and is hostile in his acts, the law here is sufficient to punish him, and what we ask is that he should be left like any other citizen to the operation of the law. I protest in the strongest possible way against the language used by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in which he suggested that those of us who take this view are acting in any sense hostile to our country, or are any less anxious and desirous to see peace restored than he is. We have supported the Government in connection with this war, and we are all anxious to see it brought to a conclusion. We are as anxious as the First Lord of the Treasury to see peace brought about, but we believe that the true method to achieve it is to see that the law is carried out in a constitutional manner.

(5.55.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have heard several abstract propositions connected with the operation of martial law from which I admit that I strongly dissent. I think the hon. Gentleman and some of his predecessors upon that side of the House have committed themselves to the doctrine that it is intrinsically and necessarily an improper use of the powers given to a Commander-in-Chief when martial law is proclaimed to say that a certain individual shall not be permitted to leave South Africa, even although he is not imprisoned and is not suffering under a sentence. I dissent from that proposition. I do not think there is the smallest justification for it, and if it be the opinion of the military authorities that serious danger to South Africa and British interests in South Africa would follow from the wanderings about the world of any person who is in South Africa, they have, in my judgment, under martial law not only the right but the duty of preventing that.

Another extraordinary fallacy which appears to pervade the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite is that there is no ground for believing Mr. Cartwright to be the dangerous person that he is represented to be, and that he has apparently been found to be by a judge and jury in South Africa, because, forsooth, the seditious libel for which he has been condemned has been published, or parts of it have been published, in a newspaper in this country. [AN HON. MEMBER: "First published."]

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Copied from *The Times*.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is that an argument which is seriously going to be advanced and seriously maintained by anybody in cold blood? Is it even worth putting forward as a debating point? Because a shocking libel upon our generals, officers, and soldiers is published for the purpose of condemnation in this country, then, forsooth, its publication for treasonable purposes in South Africa becomes absolutely innocent, is completely whitewashed, has at all events a large measure of excuse afforded to it. It appears to me that the man who published that seditious libel avowedly with a view of bringing discredit on our troops, officers, and generals, with a view of embittering and prolonging the war, with a view of opening every sore and pouring poison into every wound—that man was guilty of as base and as horrible a crime as the imagination of any of us is able to picture. If the matter is to be argued upon its merits or demerits, I do not think there is anybody, or hardly anybody, in any quarter of the House who would dare to get up and defend this Gentleman's cause.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT indicated dissent.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman's exclamation indicates that he considers that I have misrepresented some of the speeches which have been made.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is admitted that he was properly tried.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If nothing can be said on that subject, why did the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Motion—I am not quite sure whether he did, but certainly more than one Gentleman who supported the Motion—why did they bring in the fact that the publication of the libel occurred in another country?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I did not deal with that matter. I expressly confined myself to the consideration of the point which I have brought before the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought the right hon. Gentleman was one of those who stated that the libel had appeared in *The Times*. If he did not do so, I withdraw, so far as he is concerned, the charge I made; but I say boldly—and I am in the recollection of those who have heard this debate—that it has been advanced, and that it can only have been advanced to show that, after all, Mr. Cartwright may be a very innocent and well meaning person.

AN HON. MEMBER: I advanced that, and it was with no such suggestion. I advanced it not to prove anything but this: that the authorities here rightly thought that the publication of that in England was not dangerous, and that the authorities in South Africa, I presume, rightly thought the publication there was dangerous, and that therefore it was no argument for preventing Mr. Cartwright coming to England.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. and learned Gentleman thinks that I have misrepresented him, I can assure him that so far as he is concerned I will not press the matter further on the attention of the House. Another fallacy which I am bound to take notice of, and which I think has appeared in more than one speech, is that it is in order to protect the Government in this country, or society in this country, from Mr. Cartwright's libellous instincts, if such they be, that this action has been taken in South Africa. It is suggested that it is because Mr. Cartwright differs from the Government, or because he can do something in this country to this country or to the Government of this country, that his freedom of action is restricted. Of course, what he does in this country matters not a farthing to anybody, and least of all to the Government. It is not the part he may take in our domestic controversies which I presume has or could have any interest for the military authorities in South Africa. It is what the result in South Africa will be of what Mr. Cartwright might do if he left South Africa, and, be the position of the military authorities right or wrong, that is a perfectly legitimate consideration for them to take into view. It is perfectly sound in law, in justice, and in common sense. Upon the application of it I say nothing at the present time, because I think the House has a little allowed itself to forget—for in the debate it has been represented that this is a great constitutional issue—what the real issue is which we have to determine.

My hon. friends the Members for Oldham and Durham and others appear to think that if they go into the lobby this evening in favour of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, all they are doing is giving expression to some constitutional and legal view which they may be right or wrong in holding. They are doing a very different thing from that. They are passing a condemnation upon Lord Kitchener and his military advisers, and they are passing that condenmation without even having heard their case. In my opinion, it will be a very serious thing—it would be serious under any circumstances and with the fullest knowledge—for this House at the present crisis of affairs in South Africa to pass a vote of condemnation on the man who is not only managing your military affairs, but who is one of those in whose keeping at this moment rest your hopes of peace. And to embark upon such a course before you know what Lord Kitchener's case is, before you have heard his explanation of the events which occurred, to pass censure upon him untried and unheard—that, Sir, is not the way, if my hon. friend the Member for Durham will allow me to say so, to uphold the honour of the British House of Commons. I only ask the House, if they doubt the truth of the words I have just been uttering, to represent to themselves what would be the consternation in South Africa if His Majesty's Government, in connection with Lord Kitchener's action, were to be beaten on a motion for the adjournment of

the House. [AN HON. MEMBER: "They will not be."] No, but I say every man who votes for this Motion, if he contribute to the defeat of the Government, must be supposed to desire it, and, at all events, to be doing his best to bring it about. As regards the Government, I make no plea at all. I make no appeal to the House, even to those who were returned to the House to support the Government. But I do make an appeal, and I do so with some confidence, to Gentlemen on the Opposition side who have boasted of the support they have given to the war. I make an appeal to them and ask them what would be thought in South Africa by Lord Kitchener, by Lord Milner, and, above all, by our enemies in the field, if the news was telegraphed out to South Africa tomorrow that, without hearing our own generals, without knowing what they have to say for themselves, the House of Commons had passed a vote of condemnation on their action. I will never believe that this House of Commons should be guilty of so unpatriotic a piece of folly in the present case, and I earnestly trust we shall show our confidence in those to whom our interests in those far-distant regions are entrusted by supporting them on the present occasion.

(6.10.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): A remark fell from the hon. Member for Oldham, which I think ought to be in our minds on the present occasion. This is not a Party question. It is a question which ought to interest both sides of the House equally, one in which hon. Members on both sides ought to be equally anxious to arrive at a just conclusion. It is a question of the constitutional rights of the citizens of this country. I shall endeavour to deal in a very few remarks with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He began by saying that the military authorities in South Africa have the right to prevent a British subject from quitting South Africa to come to England. The right hon. Gentleman advanced no authority for that contention. He can advance no authority. I believe it to be absolutely opposed to British law, and I venture to challenge the Attorney General, whom I see opposite, to give any authority whatever in favour of the proposition that a British subject in South Africa can be prevented from coming to England, of which he is a citizen. The principle contended for by the right hon. Gentleman would equally well justify the military authorities in South Africa preventing any British subject who happened to be paying a visit there from taking his passage home to this country if they chose to think that he was going to conduct an anti-British propaganda. Suppose my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire had gone to South Africa and wished to come back. The principle laid down by the Leader of the House would be just as effective to prevent him from taking ship to England as any resident in the colony.

The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to introduce some prejudice into the question by referring to Mr. Cartwright's offence. We have nothing to do here with this offence. Punishment purges the offence, and Mr. Cartwright can only be detained under martial law, and the only test of martial law is military necessity. It has never been defended on any ground except that of military necessity. I am endeavouring to show that no British subject the military authorities chose to suspect is not to be permitted to come from South Africa to this country if he is going to have in this country an anti-British propaganda. No doctrine more absolutely novel than that a British subject is to be prevented from saying in this country whatever he likes to say, subject to his responsibility to the law has ever been contended for before. It is not because Mr. Cartwright was personally opposed to the Government that we complain of his detention. It is because we say that no British subject is to be restricted in this country except by the ordinary law of the land. When the right hon. Gentleman talks of the words Mr. Cartwright may use here going out to South Africa, does he forget that there is a strict censorship in South Africa, and that anything said here can be prevented from going into South Africa? Does he forget that others will say more than Mr. Cartwright would have said, and more than he undertook that he would not say? The right hon Gentleman asked us to consider the position of Lord Kitchener. This is not the first time that the Government have tried to shelter themselves under the mantle of Lord Kitchener. I confess I never expected to hear the head of the Government in this House try to relieve himself

and his Government of the responsibility which rests on them in this way, and trying to support and defend the claim of the military authorities to keep a British subject from leaving South Africa. Who is Lord Kitchener? He is our Commander in-Chief in South Africa, and a brave and distinguished soldier, who deserves our confidence for the way in which he has conducted the war. But he is not a constitutional lawyer. It is not Lord Kitchener's duty to say what is the law of England, what are the rights of British subjects, or whether a British subject should or should not be allowed to leave South Africa. Suppose Lord Kitchener were to say, "I think these persons ought not to leave South Africa:" that does not give him the right to prevent them leaving. The guardians of the constitution are the Ministers of the Crown, and it is not possible for them to shuffle off that responsibility. But it appears to me that they are trying to get a responsibility which is theirs on to the military commander in South Africa.

The real issue we have in this case is a simple one. We have nothing to do with the merits of Mr. Cartwright. We have nothing to do with the justice of his sentence. We have nothing to do with martial law, as I have humbly submitted, because the only test of martial law is military necessity, and it cannot be alleged that there is that necessity applicable to England, although I do admit there may be in South Africa. The real issue is shortly and simply this: whether there exists in the law of England any power or right by which the executive Government or the military Government can interfere with the rights of a British subject in England to write or speak what he pleases subject to his responsibility to the law, or to prevent him from coming to the shores of England. If that authority can be given let it be given. If it is not given we are bound to protest against such a doctrine. The First Lord of the Treasury has asked what would be said in South Africa and other parts of the world if this action with respect to Mr. Cartwright had not been taken. I should like to ask what will be said in all the countries of the world, which look to England as the home of constitutional freedom, if the House of Commons is found throwing away our constitutional rights in this fashion? There is an old maxim, "That eternal vigilance is the price of freedom," and the House of Commons will be false to its responsibilities and traditions, if it neglects to mark, to check, and to denounce this monstrous infraction of constitutional rights.

(6.20.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I think every Member of this House who has heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen must have been disposed to thank Heaven that the right hon. Gentleman is right when he says that Lord Kitchener is not a constitutional lawyer. The right hon. Gentleman has said that other nations, who look to England as the home of constitutional freedom, will be likely to form a bad opinion of us. There is such a thing as constitutional pedantry; and I venture to say that, if in the present crisis we are guided in our conduct by the maxims which the right hon. Gentleman has laid down, some foreign nations, at least, may very well be disposed to congratulate themselves that they have less constitutional freedom than is enjoyed in this country.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Oh for the freedom of Russia!

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The right hon. Gentleman has asked for a law which justifies the expulsion of a British subject from South Africa.

MR. BRYCE: I said the detention.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: In the present circumstances the rights of a person to go into Cape Town and to go out of Cape Town stand on precisely the same footing. I shall give the right hon. Gentleman no legal precedent whatever. [Opposition laughter.] Members who laugh seem to forget that the operation of the ordinary law is necessarily suspended by the operation of the military law.

MR. BRYCE: Yes, in South Africa.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: Mr. Cartwright is in South Africa, and Lord Kitchener has directed that he shall not leave South Africa. How can the right hon. Gentleman seriously ask me to produce some legal precedent in which any Gentleman has been prevented from leaving a British Colony? What have we to do in a matter of this sort? We have to deal with a great crisis in South Africa where war is raging and where rightly and properly martial law is being enforced. What is the use, in the circumstances, of asking whether there are any precedents in the law reports for preventing a man from leaving the Colony? Where military law is in force, whatever the Commander-in-Chief deems to be necessary for the safety of the country under his care may properly be done. The Commander-in-Chief in such a case takes whatever steps he thinks are necessary and when military law is in force the man in command must be trusted. Constitutional maxims are all very well but when it is contended that the Commander-in-Chief is not entitled to prevent any person leaving South Africa, I submit that a proposition of that kind is quite sufficient to condemn the argument which the right hon. Gentleman has put forward. I have been asked—By what right does Lord Kitchener prevent anyone leaving South Africa? That general proposition has been put forward, and I ask those who have ventured to put it forward to consider this case. We are dealing with questions of general principle which have been boldly advanced by hon. Gentlemen opposite who ought to have known better. Supposing the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa knew a person was about to leave the colony for the purpose of raising a force to support the enemy or for the purpose of conducting negotiations to secure foreign support. would anybody say that the Commander-in-Chief was not well within his right in preventing such a person leaving South Africa. I think this illustration will show the danger of being too hasty in advancing general propositions of this kind. We are told that in this particular case the action was unwise. My hon. and learned friend the Member for Durham said that before he condemned Mr. Cartwright he wanted to hear the case on both sides. We are not now trying Mr. Cartwright, and my hon. and learned friend seems to forget that he has been tried.

MR. ELLIOT said he knew that they were not trying Mr. Cartwright, but the point he put forward was whether Lord Kitchener had a right to detain Mr. Cartwright in South Africa after he had been punished for his offence.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I am sorry that I misunderstood the hon. and learned Member, but we cannot leave out of this case the fact that Mr. Cartwright has been tried.

MR. ELLIOT: Yes, and he has been punished.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I do not think anybody will say that the whole nature of a man is changed when he has been punished, and he may be very much the same man as he was before. We are not now going to sit in judgment upon this particular case and say whether in the opinion of this House Lord Kitchener has acted wisely or not. Martial law exists in South Africa and we must trust the man who has to administer it. Constitutional maxims are all very well, I value them as highly as any man, and I hope I am not complimenting myself too much when I say that possibly I understand them better than hon. Gentlemen opposite. But they may be misapplied, or their application may have to be paid for at too great a cost; and I submit that the House will be dealing a very great blow at its standing in the country, if in the matter before it it pronounces a vote of censure upon the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose shakes his head. Whatever may be the intention of moving the Motion, its effect, if carried, will be a vote of censure upon Lord Kitchener. The very best intentions in the world will not prevent things from having their natural effect.

"Things are what they are, and the consequences will be what they will be."

My hon. and learned friend on this side of the House, who claims to have supported the Government in this war, has spoken in support of this Motion, but he seems to think that we can treat this as an abstract question of constitutional law. But we can do nothing of the kind, and if anything is wanting to open the eyes of the House to the true issue of the Motion it will be supplied by the reception it has met with in a certain quarter of the House, where, to say the least of it, the successes of this country in the war had not been received with unmixed satisfaction.

(6.30.) SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): I do not wish to expose myself to the charge of pedantry, but after the position which the Attorney General has taken up, perhaps I may be allowed to say a word in regard to martial law and the application of it to this particular case. Martial law, as I understand it, is an extension to an army of exactly the same rights extended to an individual when he is acting in self-defence; and in the same way that a man might inflict violence or even death on others if it were necessary for the defence of his own life and limb, so an army collectively, through its commander, may defend itself in like manner, even though it is done at the price of ordinary freedom. That I believe to be the bedrock on which alone what is called martial law rests—martial law, which has been truly said to be no law at all, but administration under the stress of extreme necessity by the Commander-in-Chief in the field. In those circumstances it is perfectly obvious, in the first place, that any such application of force must be subject to the ultimate sanctions of a legal tribunal when peace is restored. Just as a man who has done a thing in self-defence may be tried for it, and if the plea of self-defence prevails be acquitted, so, after all these scenes of violence are closed, everything done under cover of martial law may be reopened before the constitutional tribunals of the country, and they alone will pronounce finally whether it has been lawful or not.

The second thing that follows from this is more important still. It is that there must be a limitation in the exercise of martial law corresponding with the necessity that evokes it. There can be no limit wider than that of actual necessity. The Attorney General did not even suggest to them that there is any limit. He seems to suggest that the Commander-in-Chief may, at his pleasure and with impunity, do whatever he thinks fit. I wholly repudiate that proposition. It is contrary to the foundations of our Constitution, and is not to be sanctioned by any authority in the past. The measure of necessity is the only measure by which we can test this action—the measure of military necessity, the defence of the army in the field. What has happened? Mr. Cartwright has been prevented from coming home. If it were said that he was a general of extreme experience and skill and was likely to join the enemy and turn his arms against the British forces, necessity might compel his being detained. But we know why Mr. Cartwright is being detained. We have been told by the noble Lord, whose candour deserves applause and respect from Members of this House, that the reason is that there may not be added another supporter to the anti-British sentiment in this country. [Ministerial laughter, and cries of "Oh," and Opposition cheers.] If any hon. Members suspect me of it—[Cries of "No"]—or my friends, I believe they never were guilty of a more cruel or uncharitable suspicion in their lives. We disapprove of much that the Government have done, and believe them to be blamable for a great deal of what has taken place. But our first and main thought is, and always will be, the honour and happiness of our own country. But I will let that be. There is supposed to be some anti-British faction in this country. It must be extremely small, but the reason why this gentleman is not allowed to come home is not because he would be likely to convert hon. Gentlemen opposite, but because he might join this small faction, which is animated by a spirit of hostility to our own country. That is not a military necessity. It is no application of the principle of martial law. It is a gross abuse of power placed in the hands of the Government in South Africa. I think it is a pity that the Leader of the House is always saying that whatever we do, or whatever we suggest is throwing blame upon Lord Kitchener or upon Lord Milner. For my part, I agree with Lord Milner even less than I do with the Government, but,

as for Lord Kitchener, I have no feeling for him but a feeling of admiration and the truest respect.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Whom are you attacking now?

SIR ROBERT REID: I do not understand the right hon. Gentleman. My criticisms are directed against the right hon. Gentleman himself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Lord Kitchener is administering martial law.

SIR ROBERT REID: The right hon. Gentleman says in his place it is Lord Kitchener who is administering martial law, but who is responsible to this House? What are we coming to in this House when we are told, when we are blaming the policy pursued in South Africa, "Oh, you are not to say anything against it, because you are reflecting on the agent on the spot"? It has been one of the maxims of the House of Commons, I always thought but I am learning a great deal that is new —very new, and not very true—I have always understood that it was one of the maxims of the House of Commons that the Government were responsible to the House for what took place abroad. But, according to the right hon. Gentleman, who seems to be extremely sensitive in regard to this, although he is not very particular in suggesting all sorts of evil consequences as likely to flow from other people's actions, it is sufficient to say, "You are making a reflection on Lord Kitchener." I venture to say that there is nothing of the kind in any of our minds. Lord Kitchener takes a particular step in regard to a particular person. He is advised, of course, whether it is within his powers or not. The only reflection I should make would be that Lord Kitchener has been ill advised as to the real meaning and effect of martial law in this case. I think it is time that the right hon. Gentleman should take the responsibility for his own conduct, and the conduct of his colleagues. Although I believe truly that the right hon. Gentleman has never been wanting in manly conduct, I think it is not like his usual manly conduct to ask that the consideration of Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner should be constantly interposed between the House and the censure which we think, on many occasions, the right hon. Gentleman richly deserves.

(6.37) SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N. E.) who was almost inaudible in the Gallery, was understood to say that in time of war, when the ordinary law was suspended and armed power was substituted for it, it was not for this House to say what were the reasons which guided our generals in the field in a particular case. Who knew what the crime was which Lord Kitchener had judged? When martial law had superseded civil law, and the ordinary rights of citizens ceased to exist—when British government in South Africa was being carried on under great difficulties, it was our duty to give credit an support to those who were carrying on the government. After the war was over, if it was thought proper, Lord Kitchener might be asked to explain his action. But that was not the question. The question was whether the Commander-in-Chief was not to have due credit given to him for a particular act. He put it to hon. Gentlemen, who had only spoken on this question from a desire to see justice done to this man, that this was not the time to go into this matter, and they would be acting most unjustly in so doing. There was a time when a Legislative Assembly tried to control its generals in the field. The Dutch States General did so, and Lord Macaulay had recorded the result, and showed that the generals in the field were much hindered by the action of the States General, who persisted in interfering with the campaign. He thought they ought to show their confidence in Lord Kitchener, and not put such a slur upon him as this Motion would undoubtedly place upon him if it was supported by a large number of Members of this House.

(6.46.) MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): The right hon. Gentleman completely misunderstands the question before the House. He talked about interfering with the generals in the field, and interfering with the plan of campaign; there is nothing of the sort here.

It is a question of permitting a British subject, against whom there is, at the present moment, nothing to be said, because he has purged his offence, to return to this country, where he is amenable to the laws of the country. The Attorney-General, whose defence was very skilfully irrelevant, has not once pledged his reputation in support of the action of Lord Kitchener in this particular case, but things have come to a pretty pass when we find a great constitutional lawyer pouring contempt upon constitutional maxims and constitutional rights. What did the Attorney General say? The learned Gentleman said there may be cases in which a general may be justified in preventing a man from coming to Europe from South Africa—as, for instance, if he is known to be, or reasonably suspected of, intending to enlist reinforcements and obtain supplies for the enemy. But such a man would be under suspicion of aiding and being in touch with the enemy, and it would be, not a question of his returning to Europe, but of his arrest on the spot. What on earth has that got to do with the case of Mr. Cartwright? This is not a case of preventing a man coming to Europe to enlist reinforcements or procure supplies for the enemy. The answer given by the Secretary of State for war is not that. He said he was not to be allowed to come to England to fight the Government.

MR. BRODRICK: No, no.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Well, to indulge in an anti-British propaganda. We know very well what that means. It means criticising the right hon. Gentleman inside the House or out of it. He has said so over and over again. Every criticism of the plan of campaign or the Secretary of State for War or the Government is an anti-British business, and ought to be put an end to. The defence of the Attorney General had nothing to do with the case, but the speeches delivered on the other side of the House, including that of the Leader of the Opposition, have shown that a tremendously grave issue has been raised. It has been said in defence of the action of the Government that the necessities of Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner are supreme, that the first thing is to bring this war to an end, that whatever Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner thought necessary in order to bring the war to an end was justifiable. What does that mean? The charge against Cartwright is that he published an article which raised rebellion in Africa, and because he did that, he must not be allowed to come to this country. He must remain in Africa. If Lord Kitchener is to say that a thing published in this country is mischievous in Africa, and therefore ought not to be published in Africa, why does not Lord Kitchener say that no criticism of the war is to be published in this country? Why should there not be prohibition of all speeches, even by the Leader of the Opposition, in the newspapers of this country? This shows what we are coming to and that is exactly the point I wish to make. Who is Mr. Cartwright I ask again. Mr. Cartwright might be an able man, but with all respect to him, he is only an obscure journalist. He is not well known, or a man of assured position. If he is stopped from returning to England because it is supposed he would write something which would criticise the Government, why should not the Leader of the Opposition be stopped, and everybody who was expected to deliver a speech supposed to be anti-British? Why should not public meetings be suppressed? I mean outside Birmingham and Ireland. According to the Attorney General, constitutional maxims do not count.

EARL PERCY: There is no martial law in England.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No, but it is coming very rapidly at this rate. What conditions has Lord Kitchener insisted on? Has he insisted, for instance, that the offence should not be repeated? If Mr. Cartwright does repeat it, he will be amenable to the law in this country, and will be doubly punished. It would then be interesting to read the comment of *The Times* on the prosecution. The fact is that Mr. Cartwright has not been guilty of wickedly inventing a slander, but of grave error of judgment in believing he was safe in publishing something which had appeared in *The Times*. For that error of judgment he very properly got twelve months imprisonment. Here we have kept in Cape Town, the centre of activity, a man who

that Bench, and ask myself the question whether Lord Kitchener may not some day be regarded with a somewhat similar amount of enthusiasm to that which Sir Redvers Buller now enjoys. What is the question here? The question is whether Mr. Cartwright shall be allowed to come to England with an undertaking. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Yes, that is so. It is so stated by the Secretary of State for War. He says that the whole point is whether he can get a sufficient undertaking to justify him in allowing Mr. Cartwright to come to England. It is not a question whether martial law shall be carried on and applied in South Africa, but whether martial law is to be extended to England. Is it not pitiful that His Majesty's Government should pursue this Cartwrighti n this way. That you should exercise all your military authority, give the greatest possible number of troops, and the most extensive power to Lord Kitchener in South Africa to follow his military operations I can understand, but what can you fear from Cartwright? What harm can he possibly do? If he can do anything it is surely rather in South Africa than here. I am very sad and sorry that His Majesty's Government have thought it worth their while so much as to cast their eyes on such a creature as Cartwright, but I am glad to see that it has been the occasion for a little movement among the dry bones of this side of the House, and for arousing some spirit in the Tory Party. I cannot so quickly forget that I am a Tory—not even in the straits of the Government over Cartwright—and that I have learned to believe in the principles of the Constitution with regard to freedom of speech. There may be those who will vote with the Government tonight. Let them remember that they are doing it at the expense of every sound constitutional principle which we have fought for, and to which the Party ought to adhere.

(7.40) MR. GUEST (Plymouth): I want to know what is the attitude of the Government now on this question. I have sat through the debate, and it seems to me that we have arrived at this point; this is a question of martial law and its interpretation. We have had martial law defined and accepted on both sides of the House. Now it seems to me that that definition has very probably been infringed, because the claim of necessity for self-defence, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite said, was entirely lost sight of when it was admitted that Mr. Cartwright was not allowed to come home, not from any question of necessity, but because of what he might do in this country. That has given way, and I feel there has been a very doubtful exercise of martial law, and under those circumstances what some of us want to know is what is the attitude of the First Lord of the Treasury and His Majesty's Government? Are they going to support Lord Kitchener through thick and thin, or are they going to admit this question of doubt as to the exercise of martial law; or are they going to grant us an enquiry? This is not so simple a matter as the First Lord of the Treasury seems to think. It is needless for me to recapitulate what has fallen from the lips of several members on this side of the House. We yield to none in our wish to carry the war to a conclusion, and to that end would support the Government and Lord Kitchener, but I think we are entitled to know what the Government are going to do. Are they going to communicate with Lord Kitchener, or simply back him up through thick and thin; or are they merely going to put their foot down and decline to have any more discussion on the great constitutional question raised tonight. It is with great deference that I appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury and those on that Bench to make some concession to the very general feeling entertained on this side of the House, and not drive those who desire to do nothing more than to support His Majesty's Government into opposition to it.

(7.45.) Mr. SEELY (Lincoln): I only rise to say, as I intend to vote for this Motion, that I do not consider it in any way whatever as a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener, and I feel absolutely certain that Lord Kitchener will not consider it so himself. It is a

vote of censure on His Majesty's Government for the manner in which they have dealt with one of the most important questions which exists for any Government, namely, their duty to protect the individual rights of British subjects. I am not going to go through the question itself. The Government know perfectly well that the reason they have given to this House for keeping Mr. Cartwright in South Africa is one which the First Lord of the Treasury, or the Secretary for War, or any man who sits on that Bench would no more have thought of giving if he had been first responsible for the matter than they would have thought of acting in the way they act in some countries we know of. Then we have had from them no repudiation of that language, no expression as to how this question of martial law ought to be dealt with. For that reason I cannot hold with them this afternoon and it is the more essentia when we are at the present moment asking large numbers of men to come under our rule. You will have to govern those men by Crown Colony Government. One thing, and the only thing, that will make these men satisfied to come under your rule is the knowledge that as British subjects they will be protected. It is because this question is at issue the question of the old rights of British subjects, the question of the proper feeling of the House of Commons, and the proper right of censuring—not the men who are fighting for them over the sea, but the Government who is responsible to them for the action of every individual and for every act of policy all over the empire that I shall support the Motion.

(7.49.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182; Noes, 259. (Division List No. 130.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt Hon. John (Montrose
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.

O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. M'Arthur.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'uthampton
Chaplain, Rt Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R. (T'r H'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hon J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)

Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B. (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H (D'mfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (Sheffield
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Tully, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Baird, and Sir Albert Rollitt; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, Mr. Rigg, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Runciman, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Gretton, and Sir Frederick Godson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SHOP CLUBS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 157.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee to be printed. [No. 157.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Wednesday 11th June, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

ORDER FOR ATTACHMENT OF A MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received the following letter relating to the attachment of a Member of this House—

"High Court of Justice, Ireland,
"Chancery Division—Land Judges.
"21st April, 1902.

"SIR,—I beg to inform you that on the 19th of this month an order was made by me for the attachment, on the ground of Contempt of Court, of Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, Esquire, Member of Parliament for Leitrim, North.

"I have, Sir, The honour to be,
"Your obedient servant,
"John Ross,
"Judge of the High Court of Justice,
Chancery Division."

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SAVINGS BANKS FUNDS.

(8.5.) SIR WILLIAM WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton), in moving that Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland be added to the Select Committee on Savings Banks Funds, said it was due to the House that he should state that it was through inadvertence on his part that the hon. Member's name did not appear on the original notice for the appointment of the Committee. He would ask the House to pass the Motion now.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland be added to the Select Committee."—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day whether he would add a labour representative to the Committee. The right hon. Member declined and said he did not recognise labour members as such. He used the term to describe that class of Member in the House who had themselves in their own lives practical experience of the wants and requirements of the great majority of the depositors in the Savings Banks and who knew their wishes. In opposing the Motion, he wished to say he had no hostile criticism to offer the hon. Member whom it was proposed to add to the Committee, nor as to the other Members of the Committee. He had no doubt that they were capable and impartial men. The Committee would have to consider exceedingly complex questions of finance, and, of course, it was desirable that it should contain Members who were especially acquainted with banking operations and with the relations of the Treasury to the Savings Banks. That was fully admitted, but, at the same time, on analysing the composition of the Committee, he found that no less than eight of its members were directly or indirectly connected with the banking interest, and the hon. Member whom it was now proposed to add to the Committee was actually a fellow director of the hon. Member for Huddersfield, also a member of the Committee, on the Board of the London City and Midland Bank. He regretted that after the attention of the Government had been drawn to the matter by his Question, they had not, in the interval, taken an opportunity, in order to secure that the Committee should be thoroughly representative, either to withdraw the name of the hon. Member in favour of an hon. Member representing the working classes, or to enlarge the Committee. If he were in order he would have moved the substitution of his hon. friend the Member for Mid-Durham. It was not merely a question of book-keeping and finance. Mr. Gladstone said it was a great question of national policy. The moment the Committee began to investigate the grave issues that would be committed to them, though there might be community of interest in one sense between the Treasury and the Savings Banks, between private bankers and the Post Office Savings Banks, he thought that it was perfectly obvious that conflicted interests would at once arise.

Of course he was precluded from going into the merits of the question, but the issues and the arguments were plain. There would be an effort to maintain or improve the rate of interest on behalf of the depositors, or to modify it in the interest of the Treasury. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had twice already tried to reduce or to modify the rate of interests, and was met by the contention that the situation was really caused by administrative restrictions, and that the Treasury was £1,600,000 in the debt of the depositors. If they went into the question of the interest or of the extension of the area of investment to find profitable investment for the enormous accumulations, there was at once conflict between the Treasury and the Banks. If they went into the question of the limit of deposits which had been raised from £30 to £50, that would immediately bring about a conflict of interest between the depositors and private bankers. All these questions were of great importance, and it was essential to the fairness of the inquiry that they should be regarded from several points of view. There was the suggestion of separating the Savings Banks from the Treasury entirely and making it a separate department, and lastly there was the question of the utilisation of the accumulations of capital in the Savings Banks for other objects. Thus in Germany, Belgium and elsewhere first the Old Age Pensions Funds and then the accumulations of capital in Savings Banks were advanced on loan for housing and

other purposes to the local authorities under conditions of equal security, and procuring a better interest for depositors. Having regard to all these questions it was desirable that on this Committee should be represented, not only the Treasury and banking interests, but also the working class interest. He hoped the Government would reconsider the matter and do something to secure the services of some one who specially represented the interests of the depositors generally.

(8.15.) Mr. SPEAKER put the Question in pursuance of Standing Order No. 16.

The House divided—Ayes, 200; Noes, 116. (Division List No. 131.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Aird, Sir John
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joseceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dewar, T. R (T'rH'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords., N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinb'rgh, W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (D'mfriessh.)
Middlemore John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson-
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John

is believed to be so dangerous that he cannot be allowed in England. What papers would Mr. Cartwright write for? He would not be allowed to write for *The Times*. Every paper which is supposed to be anti-British is prohibited in South Africa. How would any of his writings reach that country? Would they ever have any access there? No. The Attorney General was perfectly right. There is absolutely no precedent for action of this kind. It is not the first time we have had fighting in a British colony; it is not the first time we have had martial law; but it is the first time we have had a case of this character brought before the House of Commons, and the Attorney General, a great constitutional authority, has admitted that there is no record of a precedent for any such action as that of prohibiting Mr. Cartwright to come to this country. His offence, which was really that of implicitly believing in *The Times*, has been expiated, and every man in this country, however foul may be his offence, once he has purged that offence, is free to go where he pleases. The worst that can be done is to subject him to police supervision. Why is not Mr. Cartwright to be allowed to come to this country under ordinary conditions? Neither the Secretary of State nor the Leader of the House has attempted to make out a case, and the Attorney General showed that he knew something about the matter by evading the whole point.

(6.56.) MR. YERBURGH (Chester): The speech to which we have just listened shows that the question before the House falls under two heads. The first is as to whether there is power under martial law to detain any subject in Cape Colony, and the second is whether the reason is sufficiently strong to justify the detention. My hon. friends the Members for Durham and Oldham, together with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, said that in their opinion there was no power within the limits of the constitution under martial law in Cape Colony to prevent a British subject leaving the colony and coming to England.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: "No right," not "no power."

MR. YERBURGH: "Power," I believe, was the word used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen—"power" meaning "right" in this case. But when the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries addressed us, I was interested to find that he threw over the three hon. Members I have named. He told us practically that there was a right under martial law, as existing, to retain any obnoxious British subject within Cape Colony; and he then went on to say that the whole question was whether the offence committed by the individual was sufficiently serious, and whether his position was such as to render him a dangerous person in the view of the authorities. The whole question is whether the case is bad enough. The hon. and learned Gentleman went further. Not only did he lay down that proposition, but he constituted himself judge of the action taken by Lord Kitchener, because, unless my memory serves me wrongly, his words were that "This was a gross injustice." I was not in the House when the Secretary of State for War made his speech, but I understand that he used the phrase "*sub judice*," and that the words were greeted with considerable laughter. But, as far as I know, Lord Kitchener has not been heard, and yet the hon. and learned Member actually comes to that table, and, without having heard the other side, proceeds to deliver judgment against Lord Kitchener.

I have never hesitated, when I considered it necessary, to take action against my right hon. friend the Leader of the House, but I must dissent in the strongest possible way from the statement that he has tried to shelter himself behind Lord Kitchener. It must be Lord Kitchener whose conduct is called into question. It is he who is putting these powers into force, and therefore it is he whom hon. Members are condemning. My right hon. friend is therefore perfectly right in saying it is not the conduct of the Government that is criticised. Of course, if the House carry this vote, the Government stand condemned; they fall with their Commander in South Africa. But no reasonable person can have a shadow of doubt that, if a vote of this character is passed, it

casts a very heavy imputation upon Lord Kitchener. I will only say further that in my opinion the supporters of this Motion have lamentably failed to make out their case, and by the mouth of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite they have admitted their case to be absolutely unsound from top to bottom.

*(7.3.) MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): I think that within my experience a case has rarely been presented to the House in which the weight of argument was so entirely on one side. It would need some excuse on my part for trespassing for a few moments on the attention of the House at this stage of the discussion were it not that appeals have been made on the other side to those of us who on this side have on the whole supported the policy of this war, and who have, in season and out of season, strenuously defended the conduct and the reputation of our commanders and our soldiers in the field, as though by the logical necessities of their position they were bound to defend, or, at any rate, to apologise for, the course taken by the Government on this occasion. It is to demur in the strongest possible way to that proposition that I rise now to say a few words to the House. Let me brush aside, before I come to the kernel of the matter, the totally irrelevant consideration – dwelt upon by the hon. Member and put forward with great force by the First Lord of the Treasury —that if we assent to a Motion of this kind, or, indeed, if we express any dissatisfaction with the reasons which have been advanced for the retention of this gentleman at the Cape, we are guilty of passing a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener. What a ridiculous proposition! I know nothing of the inner workings of this matter or of its secret history. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen have the advantage of me in that respect, but I do know what has been disclosed to Parliament; and I entertain the strongest suspicion that Lord Kitchener had no more to do with this matter than we have. Lord Kitchener has affairs of much graver consequence to think of at Pretoria in carrying on the campaign against the Boers than in discussing with his generals or some subordinate officers in Cape Colony what shall be done with a more or less obscure journalist. Lord Kitchener has rightly, under our system—and a very good system I think it is—taken upon himself the responsibility for the acts of his subordinates, and no doubt he has presented to the Government whatever reasons can be urged in defence of it. But that does not affect in the least degree this proposition, which lies at the root of the constitutional responsibility of Ministers to Parliament, that in matters of this kind it is not the general in the field any more than it is his subordinate officer; it is the Government, and the Government alone, who are responsible.

That being so, and the question being simply whether the decision of the Government announced to-night is a right and proper decision, how does the matter stand? It depends partly on considerations of law and partly on considerations of policy. As regards the law, it has been stated by my hon. and learned friend the Member for the Dumfries Burghs, with great authority, with perfect lucidity, and in propositions which I do not think any lawyer in the House will venture to contradict. They come to this—that what is called martial law, which means the suspension of the ordinary law of the land and the rule for the time being of military force—as its existence is justified, so the extent of its application is measured and warranted by necessity alone. The Legislature in passing Acts of Indemnity after periods of martial law has never been too minute or too exacting in questioning acts which may have been, under heat and precipitation, committed in circumstances of great momentary embarrassment. I can understand a man being locked up without reason assigned if he was thought to be dangerous to the peace of a colony, or if he was likely to give assistance to the enemy in the field. I can understand under the *régime* of martial law a man being deported from the colony on the ground that under existing circumstances his room would be preferred to his company. But never until tonight, never until this case, never until the noble Lord a few days ago told us what the grounds of detention of this gentleman were, never in the history of the law, has it been

suggested that a commander was entitled, under the *régime* of martial law, not to keep a man in gaol, but to allow him to wander freely in the country where martial law prevails, and yet to keep him in that country which is the scene of disturbance against his will, unless he will give a pledge as to what he will do or not do when he gets away from the scene of disturbance to a free country where martial law does not prevail. That is the proposition, and the only proposition, which the House has to consider. Whatever your views may be about the war, its origin, and its conduct, whatever may be your admiration and confidence—and I yield to no one in that respect—in the generals and officers in the field, I say that the House is not bound by any consideration of patriotic reserve to abstain from discussing—aye, and condemning—a proposition of this kind put forward on the authority of Ministers of the day, a proposition in which I for one will never acquiesce, and against which I invite the House to protest.

*(7.10.) MR. PEMBERTON (Sunderland): It has been said by the First Lord of the Treasury and others that in voting against the Government on this occasion one would really be condemning their policy as a whole, and especially the conduct of Lord Kitchener. I do not think that is an argument worthy of the right hon. Gentleman. One may very well think the bulk of the policy of the Government to be good and sound, and be willing to support it; I think one may go further and vote in favour of certain parts of that policy of which one does not wholly approve; but there are certain things which appear to be more important than that, and this, I think, is one. Undoubtedly the Government as a whole are responsible, and I have no hesitation in saying that I think it is unfortunate they did not say that certainly this man should not be kept in Cape Colony if he wished to leave it. One could by some twisting of words—or, perhaps, I ought not to use that expression—but by some subtle argument, like that of the Attorney General prove that as martial law exists in Cape Colony the man who has to administer it—Lord Kitchener—has authority to do really as he likes. But I think the fairer way of looking at this matter would be that to keep a man in the colony cannot really have anything to do with the peace of the Empire, or with the necessities of the colony in time of war. I cannot follow that argument, and I cannot help thinking that the bulk of hon. Members of this House are of opinion that there is a weak point in this part of the argument. My contention is that if we err at all we should err on the side of generosity in preserving to the utmost the rights of any British subject. I have not the least doubt that a very large section of the Party to which I belong do not like the extension of martial law all over South Africa. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] Although we do not like it, we recognise it as a necessity to which we must bow, but that does not mean that it should not be extended to cases where it is not necessary. I hope that any limitation of the rights of British subjects will be as small as possible. This is a question to me of principle just as it is to the hon. Member for Durham and the hon. Member for Oldham and others. We think this principle is of more importance than merely supporting the Government. I think it is an unfortunate argument put forward by the First Lord of the Treasury in his appeal to the Party when he says that by voting against the Government on this occasion hon. Members will be doing serious harm to the policy of the Government. I believe that is what I may call the Government Whip, and I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to use the whip in this case. What are we elected for? We are elected, it is true, to support either one Party or the other, but we are also elected in order to exercise a reasonable discretion in certain matters. I know I was elected in this way, and I am quite willing to stand by it. I think it is most unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman should have used such an argument. Surely the First Lord of the Treasury must know that self-preservation will not induce them to vote against the policy of the Government. I do not think that should be used as an argument to influence people's votes against what they believe to be right upon a matter which many of us do not think is a question of Party, but a

question of constitution, and of the duty of this House as a House. I only regret that the Government could not give an explanation which would enable this Motion to have been withdrawn, and which would have been a far more satisfactory course than driving supporters of the Government to vote in favour of this Motion.

(7.15.) MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh): Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite would like to know that Mr. Cartwright's case did not stand alone, but that there had been a number of similar cases. It ought to be understood that the House was dealing with an attempt, not on the part of Lord Kitchener, but on the part of certain other persons in the Colony, to prevent journalists who happened to know a great deal about the facts in South Africa from coming to this country and informing the mind of the British public. He knew of at least two or three other journalists who had been or who were now detained in South Africa on the same kind of plea as that put forward in Mr. Cartwright's case.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Member that he will not be in order in discussing other cases.

MR. C. P. SCOTT said he merely wished to point out that there was a principle involved, and this was not simply the conduct of a single individual. It was said that by carrying this motion they would be passing a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener, but he did not think Lord Kitchener knew anything whatever about the cases of these journalists. He believed the course taken had been decided upon by some official at Cape Town whom he did not know. It would be a most salutary thing if they were to do something by way of protest against the excesses of these irresponsible persons —something which would clip their claws and teach them that Members of that House had a little more respect for the rights of British subjects than they appeared to have.

*(7.20) MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): The Attorney General has spoken of the pedantry of constitutionalism. But there is such a thing as the price of unconstitutionalism, and when the din of battle is over the echoes of this debate will ring in the ears of the people of the Empire. Since I have been in Parliament there has been no more unswerving supporter of the First Lord of the Treasury, and to go against the Government now, as assuredly I shall do, is repellent to me. But I wish to repudiate as warmly as I can the peroration of my right hon. friend—not a very new peroration—in which he stated that those who voted for the Motion will show themselves careless of the honour of the British Army, and of the prospects of peace.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

*MR. MALCOLM: Sir, I repudiate it, and I say to the First Lord of the Treasury, with all the respect that is due to him that I think our honour as British gentlemen repudiates the one proposition as much as the fact that our kith and kin are fighting in South Africa repudiates the other. This is not a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener. It is a censure on a policy, not on a person. The right hon. Gentleman says that we are condemning Lord Kitchener unheard, but why is he unheard? The date of Mr. Cartwright's liberation must have been known long ago, and the Government could have had the defence in their hands. But if attention had not been called to this case some days ago it might have gone *sub silentio*, and this obstruction of justice might have been turned into a precedent for the future. There is no argument which has been used more acceptably in the country than that the Government have always clean hands throughout the war in dealing with the enemy and with the pro-Boer party. But when I consider that the common law has been set at nought in this case, and that even the extraordinary law has been abused, I do not think it will be possible to go quite so cheerfully to the constituencies to talk about clean hands. [Ministerial cries of "Oh."] I lament the prejudice shown by the Secretary of State for War in his answer to the right hon. Member for Montrose. The Secretary of State enlarged on the offence of Mr. Cartwright, but that was known before; and

the offender has been punished and liberated, though he is still not free. His conduct was scandalous in the extreme, and I do not think there are any hon. Members in this House who will stand up for a moment to defend that conduct. But if it is as bad as the First Lord has made out then I think Mr. Cartwright ought to have had a far more severe punishment. But he has had his punishment and taken it like a man, and he is now out of prison again.

The question is where shall he be kept? Is he to be kept in South Africa or in England. We have been told that he will be less harmful in South Africa than in England. What has become of the unity of the Empire? Is it going to be a new item in our Imperial policy that the further the man gets away from the scene of action the more dangerous he is likely to become. If Mr. Cartwright returns to England, as I hope he may be allowed to do, and even if he does, as the Attorney General suggests, come over here and raise the banner of pro-Boerism, if he comes over here and raises an army that will march from London to Dover, then, Sir, the common law of the land will look after Mr. Cartwright, and the common law will make him just as innocuous to our people as Mr. Massingham or Mr. Stead. I wonder who is going to make Mr. Cartwright keep to this undertaking which the Government have exacted from him? Who is going to make him keep that undertaking upon his return to this country. I do not think peace will be facilitated by operations of this sort and by the total oblivion of the watchword *Civis Romanus sum.*

(7.26.) MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S. E.): So many hon. Members on this side of the House have spoken in support of this Motion that I think it is about time someone on these Benches should say a word or two for the Government. With all due respect to hon. Members who have spoken I must say that I think we have wandered into a very strange discussion tonight. The question of the constitutional rights of Englishmen has been raised and the question of the liberties of the English people, but in my opinion these questions are far away from the case of Mr. Cartwright. The question immediately before us is really whether we shall support martial law in South Africa or not. In spite of what my hon. friend below the gangway has said, I think the First Lord of the Treasury is perfectly right in saying that if we vote against the Government tonight we shall be supporting a vote of censure upon Lord Kitchener. The real question is whether we are to trust Lord Kitchener with the administration of martial law or not. The whole question of expediency must be left to Lord Kitchener. As to what was thought of martial law 2,000 years ago, I remember the description in the *Ars Poetica* of what Achilles should do; and I will suggest to the right hon. Member for West Monmouth that Achilles was more likely to bring war to an end than even a Lord Chancellor or a great constitutional lawyer. Horace wrote of the character of Achilles—

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.

As some hon. Members may probably have forgotten their Latin, perhaps it will be advisable for me to translate my quotation—

"If you would rightly depict Achilles, you must describe him as a man, active, wrathful, implacable, energetic; let him declare that laws were not made for him; let him claim everything for armed might."

I say that is a proper description of martial law, for common law cannot exist where martial law is in force. I have heard of cases elsewhere of the excessive use of power. I can remember the case of Canada. At one time, gentlemen were transported to Bermuda. That was done in pursuance of a policy undertaken by Lord Durham—a man who is much in favour on the other side of the House at the present moment. He was Governor-General of Canada, and his action on that occasion was treated in Parliament in the same way as you are endeavouring to treat Lord Kitchener's action in South Africa now. The result was that Lord Durham resigned his position in Canada, and if we are going to treat Lord Kitchener as we treated Lord Durham, we may cause that eminent General, who has done so much for South Africa, to resign his position. I think the First

Lord of the Treasury is perfectly right in asking the House to give a vote of confidence in Lord Kitchener, and I hope we shall pass it by a very large majority.

(7.32.) MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I know Mr. Cartwright, and I am probably one of the few men in the House who do know him. The hon. Member for West Perthshire would probably know him, as he has spent many years in Johannesburg. Mr. Cartwright was for a long time attached to the *Johannesburg Star*. He was there advocating the policy you are now advocating there. He changed from that policy, believing it now to be in the interest of South Africa. I have not risen to defend Mr. Cartwright or to condone his offence in publishing this article. But I do know of my own knowledge that when this article was taken from *The Times*, he never saw it, but he took the full responsibility for his action and went to prison. I say that it is gross calumny on the part of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Member for North Islington —[Cries of "Oh," and "Withdraw."]

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in order in saying a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman is gross calumny.

MR. MARKHAM: I withdraw that statement and I apologise to the House. He even said, but more especially it was said by the hon. Member for North Islington, that Mr. Cartwright was the author of these attacks on the soldiers. That statement is not true. The statement made by the hon. Member for South Longford was perfectly true that this article was published in *The Times* three weeks before, and yet you are asked in this House by the hon. Member for North Islington to condemn Mr. Cartwright as the author of this article in question. Mr. Cartwright was the one man in South Africa who was setting forth views, as he thought them, not anti-British.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is extending the debate entirely beyond the question under discussion. It is not in order to discuss the history of Mr. Cartwright prior to his being sent to prison. The right hon. Gentleman in his Motion has only raised the question of compulsory detention after his period of imprisonment has expired.

MR. MARKHAM: We have heard much in this debate about anti-British views, but if you hold that I am not entitled to debate the question whether the views and opinions which Mr. Cartwright has advocated so long are true to British interests and not anti-British interests, I will not pursue the question. Mr. Cartwright is a man than whom no one is more patriotic. I say that Mr. Cartwright has made great sacrifices. He made a grave error. It has been said that, "A man who makes no mistakes never makes anything." Mr. Cartwright having made this mistake has paid the penalty. I say that Mr. Cartwright does not hold anti-British views, but is animated by the desire of seeing this country doing what is right in South Africa, and nothing else.

(7.35.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), who was received with cries of "Divide" said: My remarks will be brief, but if they are interrupted I cannot answer for their length. I decline to discuss the merits of Mr. Cartwright, his merits or demerits having nothing to do with the matter. I also decline to discuss the question whether it is right or wrong to carry out martial law in South Africa. That has nothing to do with the matter. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury shelters himself—no, he does not shelter himself, but he cites Lord Kitchener, and says that if we are to adjourn the House this day we should pass a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener. The suggestion then is that Lord Kitchener insists on keeping Mr. Cartwright in South Africa. Where is the evidence? Not a shred of it. Not a word, not an opinion from Lord Kitchener is cited from any despatch laid on the table. No reason is assigned for Lord Kitchener being brought before the House in this way. There is not a tittle of evidence that Lord Kitchener desires to keep Mr. Cartwright in South Africa, or that he even knows the name of Cartwright. It is absurd to come to us and use the name of some great man in South Africa in this House. I have heard Sir Redvers Buller eulogised from

that Bench, and ask myself the question whether Lord Kitchener may not some day be regarded with a somewhat similar amount of enthusiasm to that which Sir Redvers Buller now enjoys. What is the question here? The question is whether Mr. Cartwright shall be allowed to come to England with an undertaking. [An HON. MEMBER: No.] Yes, that is so. It is so stated by the Secretary of State for War. He says that the whole point is whether he can get a sufficient undertaking to justify him in allowing Mr. Cartwright to come to England. It is not a question whether martial law shall be carried on and applied in South Africa, but whether martial law is to be extended to England. Is it not pitiful that His Majesty's Government should pursue this Cartwrighti n this way. That you should exercise all your military authority, give the greatest possible number of troops, and the most extensive power to Lord Kitchener in South Africa to follow his military operations I can understand, but what can you fear from Cartwright? What harm can he possibly do? If he can do anything it is surely rather in South Africa than here. I am very sad and sorry that His Majesty's Government have thought it worth their while so much as to cast their eyes on such a creature as Cartwright, but I am glad to see that it has been the occasion for a little movement among the dry bones of this side of the House, and for arousing some spirit in the Tory Party. I cannot so quickly forget that I am a Tory—not even in the straits of the Government over Cartwright—and that I have learned to believe in the principles of the Constitution with regard to freedom of speech. There may be those who will vote with the Government tonight. Let them remember that they are doing it at the expense of every sound constitutional principle which we have fought for, and to which the Party ought to adhere.

(7.40) MR. GUEST (Plymouth): I want to know what is the attitude of the Government now on this question. I have sat through the debate, and it seems to me that we have arrived at this point; this is a question of martial law and its interpretation. We have had martial law defined and accepted on both sides of the House. Now it seems to me that that definition has very probably been infringed, because the claim of necessity for self-defence, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite said, was entirely lost sight of when it was admitted that Mr. Cartwright was not allowed to come home, not from any question of necessity, but because of what he might do in this country. That has given way, and I feel there has been a very doubtful exercise of martial law, and under those circumstances what some of us want to know is what is the attitude of the First Lord of the Treasury and His Majesty's Government? Are they going to support Lord Kitchener through thick and thin, or are they going to admit this question of doubt as to the exercise of martial law; or are they going to grant us an enquiry? This is not so simple a matter as the First Lord of the Treasury seems to think. It is needless for me to recapitulate what has fallen from the lips of several members on this side of the House. We yield to none in our wish to carry the war to a conclusion, and to that end would support the Government and Lord Kitchener, but I think we are entitled to know what the Governn ent are going to do. Are they going to communicate with Lord Kitchener, or simply back him up through thick and thin; or are they merely going to put their foot down and decline to have any more discussion on the great constitutional question raised tonight. It is with great deference that I appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury and those on that Bench to make some concession to the very general feeling entertained on this side of the House, and not drive those who desire to do nothing more than to support His Majesty's Government into opposition to it.

(7.45.) Mr. SEELY (Lincoln): I only rise to say, as I intend to vote for this Motion, that I do not consider it in any way whatever as a vote of censure on Lord Kitchener, and I feel absolutely certain that Lord Kitchener will not consider it so himself. It is a

vote of censure on His Majesty's Government for the manner in which they have dealt with one of the most important questions which exists for any Government, namely, their duty to protect the individual rights of British subjects. I am not going to go through the question itself. The Government know perfectly well that the reason they have given to this House for keeping Mr. Cartwright in South Africa is one which the First Lord of the Treasury, or the Secretary for War, or any man who sits on that Bench would no more have thought of giving if he had been first responsible for the matter than they would have thought of acting in the way they act in some countries we know of. Then we have had from them no repudiation of that language, no expression as to how this question of martial law ought to be dealt with. For that reason I cannot hold with them this afternoon and it is the more essentia when we are at the present moment asking large numbers of men to come under our rule. You will have to govern those men by Crown Colony Government. One thing, and the only thing, that will make these men satisfied to come under your rule is the knowledge that as British subjects they will be protected. It is because this question is at issue the question of the old rights of British subjects, the question of the proper feeling of the House of Commons, and the proper right of censuring—not the men who are fighting for them over the sea, but the Government who is responsible to them for the action of every individual and for every act of policy all over the empire that I shall support the Motion.

(7.49.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182; Noes, 259. (Division List No. 130.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macneill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt Hon. John (Montrose
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.

O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings)
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. M'Arthur.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'uthampton
Chaplain, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, T. R. (T'r H'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hon J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn. G. R. C Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, (Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)

Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B. (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H (D'mfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (Sheffield
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Tully, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Baird, and Sir Albert Rollitt; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, Mr. Rigg, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Runciman, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Gretton, and Sir Frederick Godson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SHOP CLUBS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 157.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee to be printed. [No. 157.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Wednesday 11th June, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

ORDER FOR ATTACHMENT OF A MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received the following letter relating to the attachment of a Member of this House—

"High Court of Justice, Ireland,
"Chancery Division—Land Judges.
"21st April, 1902.

"SIR,—I beg to inform you that on the 19th of this month an order was made by me for the attachment, on the ground of Contempt of Court, of Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, Esquire, Member of Parliament for Leitrim, North.

"I have, Sir, The honour to be,
"Your obedient servant,
"John Ross,
"Judge of the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division."

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SAVINGS BANKS FUNDS.

(8.5.) SIR WILLIAM WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton), in moving that Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland be added to the Select Committee on Savings Banks Funds, said it was due to the House that he should state that it was through inadvertence on his part that the hon. Member's name did not appear on the original notice for the appointment of the Committee. He would ask the House to pass the Motion now.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland be added to the Select Committee."—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day whether he would add a labour representative to the Committee. The right hon. Member declined and said he did not recognise labour members as such. He used the term to describe that class of Member in the House who had themselves in their own lives practical experience of the wants and requirements of the great majority of the depositors in the Savings Banks and who knew their wishes. In opposing the Motion, he wished to say he had no hostile criticism to offer the hon. Member whom it was proposed to add to the Committee, nor as to the other Members of the Committee. He had no doubt that they were capable and impartial men. The Committee would have to consider exceedingly complex questions of finance, and, of course, it was desirable that it should contain Members who were especially acquainted with banking operations and with the relations of the Treasury to the Savings Banks. That was fully admitted, but, at the same time, on analysing the composition of the Committee, he found that no less than eight of its members were directly or indirectly connected with the banking interest, and the hon. Member whom it was now proposed to add to the Committee was actually a fellow director of the hon. Member for Huddersfield, also a member of the Committee, on the Board of the London City and Midland Bank. He regretted that after the attention of the Government had been drawn to the matter by his Question, they had not, in the interval, taken an opportunity, in order to secure that the Committee should be thoroughly representative, either to withdraw the name of the hon. Member in favour of an hon. Member representing the working classes, or to enlarge the Committee. If he were in order he would have moved the substitution of his hon. friend the Member for Mid-Durham. It was not merely a question of book-keeping and finance. Mr. Gladstone said it was a great question of national policy. The moment the Committee began to investigate the grave issues that would be committed to them, though there might be community of interest in one sense between the Treasury and the Savings Banks, between private bankers and the Post Office Savings Banks, he thought that it was perfectly obvious that conflicted interests would at once arise.

Of course he was precluded from going into the merits of the question, but the issues and the arguments were plain. There would be an effort to maintain or improve the rate of interest on behalf of the depositors, or to modify it in the interest of the Treasury. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had twice already tried to reduce or to modify the rate of interests, and was met by the contention that the situation was really caused by administrative restrictions, and that the Treasury was £1,600,000 in the debt of the depositors. If they went into the question of the interest or of the extension of the area of investment to find profitable investment for the enormous accumulations, there was at once conflict between the Treasury and the Banks. If they went into the question of the limit of deposits which had been raised from £30 to £50, that would immediately bring about a conflict of interest between the depositors and private bankers. All these questions were of great importance, and it was essential to the fairness of the inquiry that they should be regarded from several points of view. There was the suggestion of separating the Savings Banks from the Treasury entirely and making it a separate department, and lastly there was the question of the utilisation of the accumulations of capital in the Savings Banks for other objects. Thus in Germany, Belgium and elsewhere first the Old Age Pensions Funds and then the accumulations of capital in Savings Banks were advanced on loan for housing and

other purposes to the local authorities under conditions of equal security, and procuring a better interest for depositors. Having regard to all these questions it was desirable that on this Committee should be represented, not only the Treasury and banking interests, but also the working class interest. He hoped the Government would reconsider the matter and do something to secure the services of some one who specially represented the interests of the depositors generally.

(8.15.) Mr. SPEAKER put the Question in pursuance of Standing Order No. 16.

The House divided—Ayes, 200; Noes, 116. (Division List No. 131.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Aird, Sir John
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dewar, T. R (T'r H'mlets, S. Geo.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (Midd'x
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords., N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver Sir Lewis (Edinb'rgh, W
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (D'mfriessh.)
Middlemore John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Athlerley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hemphill, Rt Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jameson, Major J Eustace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinlock, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tip'erary, Mid
O'Brien Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Channing and Mr. Broadhurst.

NEW BILLS.

CONTEMPT OF COURT BILL.

"To amend the laws relating to punishments for contempt of Court," presented by Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. O'Dowd, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Clancy; to be read a second time upon Thursday 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 169.]

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To provide for superannuation allowances to Poor Law officers and servants in Scotland, and for contributions towards such allowances by such officers and servants, and to make other relative provisions," presented by Mr. Maxwell, under Standing Order 31; supported by Sir Lewis M'Iver, Sir Robert Reid, Mr. Nicol, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Cross, Colonel Denny, Mr. Ure, and Mr. Renshaw; to be read a second time upon Monday 12th May, and to be printed. [Bill 170.] (8.30)

NEW PROCEDURE RULES.

[TENTH DAY'S DEBATE.]

NEW STANDING ORDER—(BUSINESS IN SUPPLY.)

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed to proposed New Standing Order (Business in Supply) [11th April], "That as soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the Day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate.

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the Question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

"Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any Vote of Credit, or of Votes for Supplementary or Additional Estimates presented by the Government for war expenditure, shall not be included in the computation of the twenty days aforesaid.

"Provided also that on Motion made after notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply, shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the report of that Vote. At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the question, That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the day sappointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Com-

mittee of Supply on some day not later than Two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Which Amendment was—

"In line 6, to leave out the words 'Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the Question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account,' stand part of the Question."

(9.0.) MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford: It seems to me that this is probably one of the most far-reaching of the new Standing Orders proposed, because admittedly there is no part of the business of the House of Commons more important, from a constitutional point of view, than the right the House has always exercised up to the present of scrutinising Supply, and on Votes in Supply of discussing the whole policy and administration of the Government of the day. I protest against this new Rule *in toto*, and I take the ground of opposition that this Rule has proved in practice to be a failure. The new Standing Order now under consideration is not identical with the sessional order dealing with Supply, which has been in operation for some years. There are some differences, but in the main it is practically the same. I say, therefore, we are not in the position of considering a new Rule about which Members might have different views as to the likelihood of its success in the future. We are considering really an old Rule which has been tested by some years of experience, and, taking that ground, I assert that the Rule now before us has been proved to be a failure. This Rule involves the most important right of this House, namely, the right of discussion in Supply, and I say that it turns into an absolute mockery what was always regarded in this House as an accepted axiom of the Constitution, namely, that the discussion of grievances should precede the voting of Supply. I say in addition it has led to an increase of expenditure, and that under its operation enormous sums of money, increasing year by year, have been voted without any discussion whatever, owing to the application of the closure. Further than that, I assert that, badly as this Rule has worked generally, so far as Ireland is concerned it has rendered all effective discussion of Irish Supply and criticism of Irish administration absolutely impossible.

I remember very well when this Rule was first proposed in the House as a sessional Order by the First Lord of the Treasury. He told the House that he had devised a plan with the object of giving to private Members a better opportunity of discussing Supply, and of criticising the Government. I ask any Member of this House whether he can honestly say that the result of the working of the sessional Order during the past few years has been in that direction. I assert that the result has been the direct opposite. That is a matter of fact; it is not a matter of opinion with which I am dealing, and it can be brought to the test of figures. Under the operation of this sessional Order the number of Votes which have passed without any discussion at all has steadily and rapidly increased. In the year 1896 there were twenty-one Votes out of all the Votes applying to England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales that were passed without any discussion at all, but from that time the number has increased. The new Rule came into operation, and what happened? In 1897 there were thirty Votes passed without any discussion whatever; in 1898 there were thirty-two; in 1899 there were forty-six; in 1900 there were forty-six; and in 1901 there were ninety-six. Not only has there been an increase in the number of Votes that have not been discussed, but the amount of the Votes has also increased. In 1897 the amount of money voted without any discussion at all was £52,000,000; in 1898, £43,000,000; in 1899, £56,000,000; in 1900, £95,000,000; and last year it was £88,000,000. Is it not a somewhat appalling statement to be able to make to the House of Commons that during the

last five years of the operation of this sessional Order a sum in round numbers of £400,000,000 has been voted without one single moment of discussion?

If I stopped here and said nothing further, it seems to me that I have said enough to prove the absolute failure of this Rule which we are now to have permanently incorporated on the Standing Orders of the House. But there is very much more to be said. Under the operation of this Rule expenditure has increased in the most alarming way. No one who has listened this year and last year to the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer could fail to have been impressed with the fact which the right hon. Gentleman has pointed out, that the enormous increase of the Budgets has not been wholly due to war expenses. He has repeatedly pointed out in the most forcible manner that there has been an increase of expenditure in all departments, irrespective altogether of the war. I remember last year the emphatic and impressive way in which he warned the House of Commons, that if expenditure was not curtailed—irrespective of the war altogether—it would be necessary to increase taxation. There has been practically, as the Chancellor himself complained, no party of economy in this House. There has been no party which took upon itself the duty of endeavouring to keep expenditure within reasonable bounds. The First Lord of the Treasury has more than once in passing this sessional Rule stated that discussion in Supply has never led to the reduction of Votes. Of course, that is a statement which is technically true, but I believe that it contains a very false suggestion. It is true that when reductions are moved the Government has always, or nearly always, a majority. If it failed to obtain a majority on any particular Vote the Government would fall, and the result is that the Motions for the reduction of Votes scarcely ever lead to an actual reduction of the then Estimate before the House. But does the First Lord of the Treasury suggest that the close examination of the Estimates and the searching discussion of Supply must not tend in the direction of economy rather than extravagance? It is perfectly clear to me that the more you curtail the opportunities of discussion, and the more you limit the right of the House of Commons to examine the Estimates, the more certain you make it that the Estimates will go on increasing year by year, and I say this has been the experience of this Rule. But if these remarks apply generally how have we to look at the Rule from the point of view in which, of course, I am mainly, if not altogether, interested—the point of view of Ireland? I remember when the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Rule first he promised us for the discussion of the Irish Estimates four days, and as a matter of fact, we obtained four days under the early operation of the Rule. That was changed very soon to three days, and there is nothing in the Rule as now proposed to bind the Government to give us three days, two days, or one day. We in this matter of Irish Supply are absolutely at the mercy of the right hon. Gentleman. We have to beg from him some opportunity for the discussion of the Irish Estimates, which, of course, raise in the only effective form in which it can be raised, the whole question of Irish government and administration.

Will the House consider what the meaning of this is? Here you are governing Ireland against the will of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people. We are brought to this Imperial Parliament against our will. You by sheer force insist upon governing our country, and you actually refuse to us the opportunity of adequate discussion of our own government. For many years past there has not been one word of discussion of the Estimates for some of the most important Irish Departments of the Government. Let me take some examples. The Royal Irish Constabulary is a peculiar force. I do not intend to make any attack on the members of that force, but I wish to point out that it is in reality an army of occupation, equipped in military fashion. Now, Sir, the policing of Ireland at this moment costs per head just double what the policing of England, Scotland, or Wales costs. Obviously that is a very important Department of government in Ireland. Will it be believed that for at least five years there has not been an opportunity in this House of saying one single word on the Irish police system? We have been anxious to discuss the Police Estimates and to

protest against the maintenance in Ireland of this army of occupation, but under the operation of this Rule the Irish Members have not had any opportunity for criticism or discussion. Let me take another great Department—that of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In the old days the Lord Lieutenant was not a Member of the Cabinet and the Chief Secretary was, but now the order is reversed; and will it be believed, that for years we have been given no opportunity of discussing the enormous cost of the establishment of the Lord Lieutenant, who is now primarily responsible for Irish administration?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Member is aware, it is impossible to discuss the question of Irish policy on the Lord Lieutenant's Vote.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I do not agree. The Lord Lieutenant is the representative of the Irish Government in the Cabinet, and on the question of the Vote for the Lord Lieutenant I maintain it would be in order to discuss the question of Irish administration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sure the hon. Member is mistaken.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The cost of the government of Ireland is the most extravagant in the world. The Lord Lieutenant is paid a salary exactly double what the President of the United States is paid, and the whole cost of the maintenance of the Lord Lieutenant's department is excluded from discussion by the operation of this Rule. In 1897 I find the Vote for the salaries of the Resident Magistrates was closured. I do not know whether the Vote is to be closured this year or not. In 1897 Resident Magistrates in Ireland were not engaged in as difficult and responsible duties as they are now. Now, the administration of the whole of the criminal law of the country is placed in their hands They are responsible to no one—they are removable at a moment's notice. They are made up entirely almost of half-pay officers, promoted policemen, and a small percentage of the whole are gentlemen who were called to the Bar and were failures at their profession. Trial by jury is suppressed by a recent proclamation among a population of one and a half millions of the people, and is it tolerable when this is done that there is to be no opportunity given on the Estimates for the discussion of the money paid to these gentlemen, and that we are to be put off simply by the statment that there is no time, that the two or three or four days allotted to Irish Estimates have been exhausted, and that the closure is to be applied to the remaining Irish Votes? Similarly, with regard to the question of grants to Queen's Colleges, raising in an important way the whole question of University education. Nine of these were discussed in 1897. In 1898 the Local Government Vote was not discussed. The County Courts Vote was not discussed, and the Chief Secretary's Vote—and if the Leader of the House is right, as I am not sure he is, that the administration of Ireland could not be raised on the Lord Lieutenant's Vote—what is to be said for the system of Supply under which both the Lord Lieutenant's Vote and the Chief Secretary's Vote were both closured without discussion? Yet we find that in 1898 and last year there was not one single hour devoted to the discussion of one of those Votes or the other. The Chief Secretary's Vote this year was discussed in an indirect way. We succeeded in getting it put down first in the Vote on Account, and in that way we have succeeded in having a discussion, but, so far as the ordinary estimates are concerned, I take it for granted that this year—just as last year and the year before—the money to be devoted to the cost of the Chief Secretary's Department will be closured, and we will have no opportunity for a discussion whatever. Last year the Land Commission was not discussed. Does it not reduce the whole Government of Ireland to an absolute farce when you find in the same session of Parliament the Lord Lieutenant's Vote, the Constabulary Vote, the Land Commission Vote all closured without one word of discussion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is that last year?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Yes, last year. I do not know whether hon. Members quite realise what this Land Commission is. The Land Commission is engaged in the fixing of what is called fair rent in Ireland. It is intimately concerned in a hundred ways

with the very life of the great majority of the people. There is not a day that passes over my head that I do not receive representations from one part of Ireland or another asking me when the Estimate for the Land Commission come on to call attention to this or that grievance. Yet the Land Commission Vote was passed last year without one single moment of discussion. I put it to the House of Commons, does it not reduce the whole Government of Ireland to a farce; and I am anxious not to repeat myself, but must emphasise the fact that you have deprived us of our own Parliament, which was co-eval and co-ordinate with your own, and that lasted as long in Ireland as your Parliament lasted in England. You took away our Parliament by force, and you insist on governing Ireland from England; yet you refuse an opportunity to the Irish representatives in this House to discuss the Estimates of one of those great Departments of Government that you insist on keeping in your own hands.

It may be asked, have you any remedy to propose? The right hon. Gentleman is proposing these Rules as a remedy for some of the evils which are connected with the present system of doing business in this House. He has been perfectly candid in this, for in his speech in Manchester he admitted that the new Rules could not do much; yet he expects them to do something. What does he propose to remedy this evil with reference to Supply? Absolutely nothing. He proposes to re-enact, in the shape of a Standing Order, the sessional Order which has been in use for the last five years, and under the operation of which all these evils have taken place. I do not think sufficient attention was paid to the speech of the Leader of the House the last time this Rule was under discussion. He took it for granted that the session would only be six months, or 960 hours. He stated that out of that, thirty-five days would be allotted to Supply, and he went on to say that out of the number of hours in the whole session thirty-five days was a reasonable time to give to Supply. I admit that thirty-five days does seem a large proportion to give to Supply out of the time mentioned. But when he gives thirty-five days to Supply he is not able to produce a better state of things than was produced under this Rule for the last five years. What justification is there for turning this Rule into a Standing Order at all? Under the existing Rule I have pointed out the number of Votes that have passed without discussion at all has gone on increasing from twenty-one to ninety-six, and the amount of money has increased from something like £30,000,000 to £95,000,000 or £100,000,000. If thirty-five days is a large proportion out of 960 hours in a session for Supply, what does it point to? Surely it points to the impossibility — the absolute impossibility — under existing conditions, and within the limits of a session of six months, to adequately discuss the business that comes before this House. When it is seen that between four and five hundred millions of money is passed without discussion in five years, no one can pretend that the discussion of Supply is proper or adequate. The right hon. Gentleman accused me in the commencement of the session of making the same speech again and again, and I answered him by saying that I had come to the House of Commons to make one argument, and one only, and that is to point out to the House of Commons that they are engaged in an impossible task. Increase the session from five to twelve months, and you will not get rid of the difficulty. You would not be able even then to give adequate time for the discussion of Supply, and provide reasonable time for the discussion of other matters.

I have never disguised that from one point of view I have welcomed these new Rules. I regard them as the last dying effort to make the present system successful. The Leader of the House himself has to admit that these new rules will not remedy the evils, and every man of common sense who knows the House, knows that you cannot remedy the evils under which the House is labouring. The truth of the matter is that as the guardian of Supply, this House is a lamentable failure. But has it not also broken down as a legislative machine? According to the Leader of the House there remain only out of the whole session 276 hours for the discussion of all the legislative business, and all the affairs of the Empire.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Legislative business.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: But legislative business includes many things that might be held to be included in it—for instance, it includes the Budget.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No. The general argument of the hon. Member is quite correct, but I carefully excluded the Budget from that. What I meant was there were only 276 hours for new legislation which the country requires and for carrying on its work with regard to home affairs or colonial matters in which legislation is required.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That is to say that 276 hours is all the time that this House can afford to the whole legislative programme of the Government, whether dealing with England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the Colonies, or any other part of the Empire. Is not the mere statement of that an absolute condemnation of the present system, and an absolute proof of the impossibility of the present system? It is absurd to think that the whole legislative programme of the Empire can be conducted with efficiency in 276 hours; and I think it is the most conclusive proof ever given of the absolute breakdown of this House as the guardian of Supply, or as the legislative machine. Does the Leader of the House propose to go on as we are going at the present time, knowing that year by year the block of business will go on increasing, knowing that the multiplicity of duties in which the House is engaged will go on being infinitely greater? This particular Rule will have the effect of cutting us out from any adequate opportunity of discussing the Government of our own country that has been forcibly taken away by this House; and I hope no effort will now be made by the right hon. Gentleman to curtail discussion upon this Rule. It is by far the most important, and it would be monstrous, certainly, if any attempt were made to scamp discussion of this resolution, or if adequate consideration were denied of putting into the form of a Standing Order a sessional Order which has been in operation for five years, and the result of which has been the increase of the general expenditure of the country, an increase of the number of Votes passed without discussion, and which also had the effect of passing in five years without a word of discussion £500,000,000 of public money.

*(9.43.) SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that on both sides of the House there were differences of opinion with regard to the nature of the devolution which ought to be adopted by the House, but every Member on the Opposition side would concur in what was said by the Leader of the Irish Party. Knowing the difficulties that had to be met and coped with, some would go further, some not so far; but all would go as far as the hon. and learned Member had done with regard to the right way of dealing with them. This Rule was undoubtedly popular, not only with the administration, but also to a large extent, with the majority of the House of Commons. It was the Members who did not attend during discussion in Supply who were the main supporters of the Resolution. It gave them a day upon which they could go away and leave the conduct of the business to a hundred Government Members and the critics, who were at liberty to vote for or against the Government. From the first he had very much doubted the wisdom of this Rule, although it no doubt had many beneficial results. It enabled the House to discuss great questions of policy arising out of the Colonial, Foreign, and Post Office Votes. More such questions had been adequately discussed under this Rule than before, but on the other hand, it had completely extinguished the opportunities for discussion on minor but important Votes, in which, perhaps, more than in the larger matters, administration needed to be watched and criticised. The Colonial Vote, for instance, was one of those which at the present time embraced one large question which took up a good deal more time than was usually the case, and as a consequence all minor questions formally raised upon the Vote were extinguished. Before this Rule came into operation, all those matters were discussed, but since it had been in existence, barely one had been subjected to a discussion. The success of the Rule depended upon the way it was worked, and it had worked better in the first year of its existence than it had ever worked since. The old arrangements with

regard to the disposition of the days of Supply had been gradually broken down, and more and more apparent became the tendency to confine the days allotted to Supply to the discussion of a number of very important Votes, which completely cut out from all discussion Votes of minor interest. The evils of the old system were great, and the evils of the new system, which were also obvious from the first, were becoming more apparent year by year, and he was perfectly convinced that unless some such remedy as was proposed was adopted they would increase until the matter became a public scandal.

*(9.50.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that what had impressed him more than anything else was that this House was becoming imbued with the great fact that it was unable to carry on its business because it was attempting to carry a load which it was incapable of carrying. As it affected Ireland, he agreed with the hon. Member for Waterford that the operation of the Rule in the past had been very serious indeed, and that it was likely to become more serious in the future. There were thirteen contentious Votes on the Irish Estimates, and out of those thirteen contentious Votes they were only able to discuss four last year. Where were they likely to be this year? Let the House just consider where this Rule would probably land them. For weal or woe, nine Irish counties and two Irish cities had been proclaimed under the Crimes Act. Questions connected with the action of the authorities under that proclamation, the action of the police, the right of public meeting, the action of the prison authorities, and so on, were certain to arise. If the constitution were suspended, and the form of government provided under the Crimes Act established, surely Irish Members had a right to demand that there should be opportunities for reviewing the methods of the Irish Executive if they thought fit to do so. They had always had that right in the past; no one in bygone days had conceded it more freely than the present Leader of the House; and what they had done in past days they had a right to do now and in the future.

Then there was the Land Commission Vote. That had not been discussed for two years. The whole property of the country was practically at the disposal of that Department, and not a day passed but Irish Members received letters from constituents asking them to bring certain cases under the notice of the House in reference to the Land Commission. The State paid £140,000 a year for the upkeep of the Commission; the Commissioners proceeded very leisurely in their work, maintaining that the methods which had been brought into operation by Parliament took far more time than the old methods; the rents fixed per annum now were less in number than in the olden times; but no opportunity was afforded of discussing these things. There was also the question of appeals, which really was a public scandal. For two years this Vote had not been discussed, and he saw little prospect of the opportunity arising in the future.

Another important Department was the Local Government Board. Three years ago a great measure of local self-government was passed for Ireland. Happily, it had worked exceedingly well, but there were certain questions which not only would bear, but demanded discussion. When that measure was being considered, the Government gave way to the landlords and abolished the single Member constituencies, putting in their place double constituencies. The result was that room could not be found in the Board-room for the Members; the meetings were simply crowded Babels, and it was almost impossible to do business. The Board was perhaps the weakest in the whole of Ireland; it was constantly in collision with the local authorities; friction existed all over the country. It would do good to the Board itself if its public action could be discussed in the House, but no opportunity for such discussion arose.

Then there was public education—the greatest scandal of all. Practically a new system of primary education had been set up, but Members had not had a chance of discussing it. Twelve months ago Dr. Walsh resigned his seat on the Board; no successor had been appointed, but there had been no opportunity of finding out why. The position of teachers and the position of the training colleges also required consideration. If the House of Commons was to legislate for Ireland, it was bound to give Irish

Members of every party an opportunity of fairly discussing the business of Ireland. That opportunity was practically denied under this Rule. He would probably be told that Ireland was treated no worse than England or Scotland in the matter, but that was not the case. Not a single year passed in which the chief Departments of Government in England were not discussed, but out of the thirteen great Departments in Ireland only four were discussed last year, and then in a most perfunctory and inadequate manner. But there was a strong reason why Ireland should not be placed even in the same position as England or Scotland. The House might shut its eyes to the fact, but the fact could not be got rid of. England and Scotland were governed by consent; Ireland, in the main, was not. That made an enormous difference, and ought to constitute a reason for giving a great deal more attention to Irish affairs than they at present received.

By the proposal before the House they were asked to turn a sessional Rule into a Standing Order. The only reason given for the change was that the Rule had worked better than the old system. It was not that it worked well; nobody could say that. The Rule had absolutely broken down; last year it was necessary to closure Votes comprising £80,000,000 without a word of discussion. The House would be taking a very serious step in adopting the proposal of the First Lord. He doubted whether the right hon. Gentleman was exactly right in saying that things were worse in former days. That depended upon from where they started. He could remember a time when the great block in Supply did not occur, and when the Estimates were properly discussed. It was only since the late seventies and the early eighties that this block had arisen. Why should not the meaning of that be recognised? Why should it not be recognised that old things had passed away and all things had become new? What was the use of putting new wine into old bottles? Why should it not be recognised that the House of Commons had changed, that the democratic spirit had entered into it, and that it could not be worked today on the principles of twenty or thirty years ago? He was concerned only for Ireland, and he looked forward with absolute apprehension to what would happen this session or next in regard to Irish Supply if Irish Members were not allowed to discuss Irish government. If at the end of the session the Votes for all these Irish Departments were put in a lump sum without discussion, there would be placed in the hands of those who advocated Home Rule an irresistible argument. It was impossible to go on with the work of the House in its present condition; they were attempting an impossibility, and the sooner they awoke to the fact the better it would be for England and for Ireland.

(10.6.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had only proved that no one could accurately forecast the effect of a change in the procedure of the House until the change had been in working for five or six years. For the first session or two after the introduction of a change, the Government responsible for it, and especially while it was a sessional Rule, exercised an amount of forbearance, toleration, and moderation in its use, in order to recommend its adoption to the House. But, as he had before said, in considering new Rules of Procedure, the House should endeavour to measure their merits not by considering how they would work in the hands of an indulgent and tolerant Government, but how they must be worked for the purposes of silencing opposition. The Government, harassed as they were and as they would be in an increasing degree by the complicated affairs of this enormous Empire, would inevitably strain to the uttermost the power given them to expedite business and silence opposition, and it was from that point of view that the critics of the Government were bound to consider any departure from the ordinary procedure of the House. He had been a bitter opponent of this Rule from the outset. For twenty years he had taken a close interest in the work of Supply, and the prophecies he made in 1896 that the optimistic views then put forward in regard to this Rule would be unfulfilled, and that the Rule would work worse and worse in each succeeding year, had been

amply justified, and many men who then supported the Rule had come to the conclusion that it was calculated to impair, if not to destroy, the efficiency of the House of Commons as a check upon expenditure and an instrument for criticising the action of the Executive Government.

In 1896 the First Lord of the Treasury said that the sole object of the Rule was to afford more ample opportunities for discussing the business of Supply, and the attempt was made to induce the more innocent Members of the House to imagine that the Government were making some concession in return for the taking of Fridays from private Members. That was an absolute mistake. Private Members obtained really nothing as a *quid pro quo*. From time immemorial Fridays, in addition to Tuesdays, had been private Members' nights. Down to about thirty or forty years ago, on every Friday a Motion was made at the commencement of public business that at its rising the House should adjourn until the Monday following. On that Motion any subject under the sun could be discussed, and it was a privilege which could not be taken away even when the Government took the time of the House. That was one of the reasons so few Questions were asked in those days. Members would wait until Friday to press a Minister for information, and then, if information was refused, a Motion could be moved and the question adequately discussed. That privilege was so largely availed of, that frequently business did not commence until eight, nine, ten, or even eleven o'clock. That privilege was taken away from private Members on the express condition, understanding, and bargain that Supply should be put down as first Order on Friday in order to give Members an opportunity of moving Motions against the Question "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair." A suggestion was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire about the year 1894 that there should be one day every week devoted to the business of Supply. An attempt was now being made to father this rule upon the right hon. Gentleman because of that suggestion. He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman would ever have supported a proposal that the devotion of one day every week to Supply should be supplemented by this automatic closure at the end of the session. The really vicious element in this Rule was its want of elasticity and the application for the first time in the history of Parliament of the automatic closure to the business of Supply. He prophesied in 1896 that if this Rule were passed it would be followed by a great and rapid increase in the expenditure of the country, and at that time he was laughed at for making such a prediction.

The figures were so remarkable that he would ask hon. Members to listen to them. In 1880 the net expenditure for Great Britain, excluding the grants to the Local Taxation Fund, amounted to £71,648,000. In the year 1895–6 the amount was £85,700,000. In other words, in fifteen years the total increase in the net expenditure amounted to £14,000,000, or a little under an increase of £1,000,000 per annum. In the year 1896 this closure Rule was first introduced. In the year 1895–6, as he had already stated, the net expenditure was £85,700,000, and in 1899–1900, the year preceding the war, the total net expenditure was £114,600,000, an increase in four years of £29,000,000, or an average increase of £7,000,000 per year since the Rule came into operation. This increase came on the top of an average increase for the previous fifteen years of nearly £1,000,000 per annum. Was it not a remarkable fact that hon. Members who opposed the Rule in 1896 prophesied that this Rule would come to pass? It might be said that there was no connection between this increase and the closure Rule, but if all the causes of this enormous increase were investigated they could not shut out altogether the operation of this Rule.

What sudden change had occurred in the condition of the world to justify this phenomenal and revolutionary jump in the expenses of this country? They heard a good deal about the condition of Europe, but he defied any hon. Member to point to any striking event which occurred about the year 1895 or 1896 which would explain why the expenditure of this country had increased by £6,000,000 per annum. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed new taxes, and appealed to all sides of the House to support him in the economy which he preached and did not practice, it was absurd for the right hon.

Gentleman to groan and lament and fill the country with his wails over new expenditure when the Government deliberately set themselves the task of cutting away those safeguards against extravagance which had been adopted by the experience and wisdom of generations. Everybody who had followed with attention the recent discussions in Supply, which took place so constantly not only inside but outside this House in regard to the expenditure on the Army and Navy, would agree with him that one of the great complaints of experts and advocates of such expenditure was that Ministers in the past had felt compelled to put down their Estimates for fear of the criticism in Committee of Supply. He regretted that that fear had grown less and less, and it had now almost entirely vanished. The experts and advocates of expenditure were no longer afraid of the Committee of Supply, because they knew that the closure would prevent those criticisms which Ministers were afraid of. That was the reason why he claimed that the operation of this Rule was a large element in causing the enormous and outrageous increase in the expenditure of this country which was annually wept over by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Committee of Supply used to be the right arm of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it used to be the means by which he was enabled to resist the experts of the great fighting Departments of this country which were always pressing for increased expenditure. The more money they allowed to those great Departments, the more they developed the pressure for greater Votes. In this way the automatic closure Rule had operated as an immense incentive to extravagance. What was the use of hon. Members coming down to the House to worship at the shrine of economy when Rules like this were in force for promoting extravagance? If they adopted this Rule, they must be prepared for increased taxation. The great fault of the Rule which they were now being asked to make a Standing Order was the application of automatic closure to Supply. Hon. Members would remember the protest made by the Leader of the Tory Party against the closure when it was first introduced, and there was a still more violent protest made against the automatic closure which was discussed in this House for weeks and months. In the case of great Bills, the judgment of the House was asked for in a particular case, and on the merits of that particular case, and the closure was not applied until discussion had gone on perhaps for several weeks.

Under this Rule they were asked to vote the automatic closure upon what he considered to be the greatest business of Parliament. They were asked now to pass the Rule for the granting of large sums of money without reference at all to the question whether it had been properly discussed or not. An attempt was made by the First Lord of the Treasury to show that there was a great difference in principle between applying the closure to Bills and applying it to Supply. He could not see any difference in principle between a Standing Order applying the automatic closure to all legislation just before the end of the session and its application to Supply. He could give three or four reasons why the closure was more objectionable to Supply than to legislation. When it was applied to Supply it was more opposed to the old traditions of Parliament. Automatic closure was introduced in the year 1896, whereas the closure applied to Bills had been in existence for over ten years. The business of Supply was at least as important as legislation. Supply was the only means by which the action of the Executive Government could be made responsible to the House of Commons. That was the great function which distinguished the House of Commons from other Assemblies—the power of controlling the Executive Government from day to day. The Committee of Supply was the only place where those who were in favour of economy could endeavour to safeguard the taxpayers. The work of Supply was the only work of the House of Commons which could not be reviewed and altered in another place. What would be said to a Minister—perhaps the occasion would arise—who came forward with a Standing Order to the effect that on a certain day in August all the legislation pending in the House should be passed without discussion. He defied any Member making a good case for the closure of Supply to make a good case against the automatic closure of Bills clause for clause. The First Lord said in 1896, when introducing this Rule for the first time, that when a Bill was passed a permanent alteration was

made in the laws of the country; but Supply being annual expenditure, what Parliament had done in 1895 it could undo in 1896. He (Mr. Dillon) disagreed with that. Were they to be told that the action of the Executive Government was so light and trifling in its consequence when a slight difference might have prevented the South African war? He should like to know when we could undo the effects of the South African war, and a very little might have altered the course of those tremendous events. For a long time it was very doubtful whether we should have any war in South Africa or not. Generations would pass before the effects which had flowed from the action of the Executive Government in the Spring of 1899 could be undone. There was no reality in the distinction which the right hon. Gentleman had made. The fact was that the actions of the Executive, having regard to the results which frequently flowed from them, were frequently much more far-reaching in their consequences than any legislation placed upon the Statute-book. He thought it was more true to say that they could undo legislation more easily than the results which sometimes flowed from the action of the Executive.

This Rule had worked very badly Everyone admitted that. Suggestions had been made from time to time as to some plan by which the evils which had grown up might be dealt with. There was the suggestion of the First Lord that a Committee should be appointed, having power to allocate the time to the Votes and the order in which they should be taken. He opposed that proposal, because he believed it would be absolutely unworkable. It was an attempt by the Government to shuffle the responsibility off their own shoulders, but it would break down. The real essence of a good system of discussion in this House was that it should be to some extent elastic. It was absolutely preposterous to suggest that the whole time should be measured out, a certain proportion of the time being given to particular Votes. He remembered when an hour was long enough for the Colonial Office Vote, but since the wide-spread activity of the present occupant of that office, the general feeling was that two or three days would be little enough; and the same thing was true of the Home Office and the Foreign Office. It was idle to say that at the beginning of a session they could measure out so many hours to one Office, and so many to another Office, without any real regard to the work of the Departments. What they wanted was a fairly elastic system, which would give interest and reality to the debates, and not destroy the interest of a Minister in giving satisfaction to his critics. In the old days a Minister really exerted himself to meet objections and criticisms and to carry his Vote through, but at present Ministers had no motive whatever for taking any trouble with their Estimates. Mr. Courtney was as good an authority on procedure in Supply as ever sat in the House. He was rather inclined to support the Rule at first, but he said that experience showed that it tended to produce more negligent discussion. Ministers need not trouble at all, and Members would probably admit that they had lost zeal and pleasure in worrying them. The offer, he continued, of the First Lord of the Treasury of a Committee in which the Opposition would be in a majority, was a self-sacrificing offer, but was an illustration that the business of Supply no longer worried Ministers. That was Mr. Courtney's opinion, and he was absolutely right. It was an explanation of what had taken place since the Rule came into force. The fact was that under the Rule discussion of Supply had become a farce, and they were only at the beginning of that. If the Rule was to be enforced, he looked forward to the time when Ministers would treat all criticism in Supply with absolute contempt. Supply in future would not be got through by argument, explanation, or defence, but by force and automatic closure. Why should Ministers work for hours to get up information, when all they need do would be to make a brief speech, and wait until the clock struck twelve? That was the reason why Ministers were so fond of the Rule, and that was the reason why n its operation it had unquestionably acted as a powerful stimulus to increased expenditure. He would not allude to the effect of the Rule on Ireland, because that had been eloquently

dealt with by his hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone. But he believed that no more revolutionary change had yet been made as regarded the rights of Members, and no greater blow had ever been struck at economy than the proposal of the Government. He cared very little for the orations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Members in favour of economy, when the great safeguards of economy were swept aside recklessly in order to clear the path for the great spending Departments. For that reason he was more bitterly opposed to the Rule after five years experience of it than he was when it was first introduced, and he ventured to prophesy that some day or other—he did not know whether he would not be in the House to see it—the Rule would be used by a Radical Government to apply automatic closure to Bills, and the Tories would then not be quite as happy over it as they were at present.

(10.52.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether the House will permit me to say a few words on this Amendment, on which I think I have already said something at an earlier stage. I recognise that this may be regarded as a central position as to the number of days to be given to Supply, and I trust when we have dealt with this Amendment that we will proceed rather more rapidly with the main portion of the Rule, which, in all its principal parts, has been introduced session after session since 1896. I differ from almost every proposition which has been laid down by the hon. Gentleman who has just resumed his seat. The hon. Gentleman says that since this Rule was introduced, expenditure has greatly increased, and he infers from that that, because this Rule was introduced, the consequences which he deplores, and which, in a measure, we all deplore, have come upon us. Is there a single hon. Member so young in his experience of the House, so blind in his perception, as to believe that discussions in Supply, either under this Rule or before it came into operation, have any serious effect on the total amount of the Estimates? The hon. Gentleman associated himself with the hon. Member for South Tyrone in lamenting the small amount of time given to Irish Supply. Is there a single Irish Member, including the hon. Gentleman, who has ever suggested that a less amount should be spent on the Irish Estimates? [Mr. LOUGH, Yes, on the Constabulary Vote] Yes, reductions have been moved to the Constabulary Vote, but were they for the purposes of economy? I do not think that any Irish Member has any desire that the sum paid by the Saxon taxpayer for the Irish Estimates should be reduced. The smallest consideration of the matter quite conclusively proves that it has not been due to any change in our system of taking Supply that the Estimates have increased. Some of these increases have been due to alterations in the law, such as the aid of voluntary schools, relief to the ratepayers, and so forth. That is one great branch. The other great branch includes Navy and Army expenditure; and, as the right hon. Baronet told us earlier in the debate, the Navy and Army Estimates have not only had as much time given to them as in former days, but I think it can be shown by statistics that even more time has been devoted to their discussion. I do not say it is not an ingenious point to make in debate, but no one acquainted with the method by which the House of Commons does its business would really suggest that discussion in Supply or the limitation of that discussion, has the smallest connection with the growth of expenditure. If it is any consolation to the hon. Gentleman, I may state that I am informed—I have not personally verified the facts—that in 1894, which was the last complete year before the Rule came into operation, in the three days following the 5th of August, 118 Votes, involving twenty-five millions of money, were disposed of by the House of Commons. [Sir CHARLES DILKE: There was an opportunity given for discussion.] Yes, if the right hon. Baronet calls five o'clock in the morning an opportunity for discussion, no doubt there was. It is perfectly well understood that there are two forms of closure by which Supply is got. Before the Rule came into operation there was a form of closure, not less effective not less destructive of discussion, but which had also the effect of destroying the comfort and even the health of Members;

and in no sense, I venture to say, did it lead to a proper debate on the Estimates or to the dignity of the House. A special complaint has been made—I mention it now because it may perhaps save us from debate on a later Amendment—of the amount of time given to Irish Supply. The average has been three or four days, more often four days, and it is asserted by the hon. Member for South Tyrone that last year the Local Government Board required to be discussed, and yet no opportunity for discussing it arose. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I said it was discussed on the last day.] I would remind my hon. friend that it was discussed on an earlier day—not indeed, in Committee of Supply, but on the Consolidation Bill, I think in March. If the hon. Gentleman will consider the amount of time available in this House, and the manifold calls upon it, I think he will admit that two days to discuss the Irish Local Government Board is as much as this House can afford.

The Leader of the Irish Party made a speech earlier in the evening in which he expressed agreement with the general position I have taken up with regard to the distribution of the time of the House, and drew from it a conclusion, which certainly will not be accepted on this side of the House, that Home Rule, and nothing but Home Rule, or devolution in some form indistinguishable from Home Rule, was the only remedy. I will not argue that point now, and I will only say that if, and until, this devolution takes place, the present system of arranging the distribution of Supply is the only effective one. I would remind Irish Members that it rests with themselves as to how the three or four days, as the case may be, given to Irish Supply should be distributed. I do not think that they will deny that if they had been anxious to compress their criticisms of the Irish Executive into three days it would be in their power to do so. A great deal of abuse can be crammed into three days. I really do think that if they devoted themselves to the task, no single Irish official, from the Lord Lieutenant down to the humblest constable in any county in Ireland need escape their all-searching criticism had they desired to make the most of their opportunities. Now let me come to a remark of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I stated what I thought was universally admitted—that discussion in Supply, though it may occasionally tend to extravagance, has never yet during the last generation tended to economy. Then, says the right hon. Gentleman, what is the use of it? The use of it is to criticise, constantly to criticise, and to keep under the constant and incessant criticism of the House the action of the Executive Government. That this has been effectively done under the new Rules of Supply, as regards the larger votes, has, I think, been admitted by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. [Sir CHARLES DILKE: As regards the principal questions raised on larger Votes.] Quite so. The right hon. Gentleman admits, so far as large issues are concerned, that the result has been that the Executive of the day is taken to task at a more convenient period of the session. I agree with him that there are a certain number of the smaller Votes which escape discussion, and that the smaller questions on the bigger Votes also escape discussion; but I think the result will be mitigated by the new Rules in this respect, that there will be two sittings in each day instead of one. The difficulty of arranging Supply under the old Friday Rule was that if a Vote were begun at six or seven o'clock in the evening it might drag on, though it ceased to be of interest or utility to the House, to the exclusion of other questions which might have been discussed in its place. There are many things for which the Government are supposed to be responsible. One is that the Minister in charge in the House has not been sufficiently seductive in manner and has not been able to act the part of Orpheus with his lute. I hope the present Front Bench are not more wanting in good manners than their predecessors, but even the most painstaking and sympathetic Secretary to the Treasury cannot induce certain hon. Members to agree with him.

Another charge brought against the Government is that they do not closure often enough, but when we do use the closure we are very often greatly abused. By moving the closure in Supply we should expend perhaps half an hour or twenty-five minutes upon two divisions, and we should very likely irritate some irritable

susceptibilities of hon. Members, and probably the House would not get any quicker to the discussion of those small matters which hon. Gentlemen desire to discuss than if you had waited until mere fatigue brought oratory on that particular question to an end. I hope that there will be some remedy applied to this by the system of devolution which has been proposed. Probably then smaller questions will have a better chance than under the old system. I have never claimed for these Rules more than they can accomplish. I have never pretended that they will hasten business or will enable 670 Gentlemen to discuss in detail every Estimate. No scheme can possibly accomplish it, unless we mean to devote twelve months to the operation. It all comes back to the simple, fundamental arithmetical problem which I have already propounded to the House, and to which no reply has been given, as to the number of hours we can devote to legislation.

As I have pointed out before, at the present time you only give 276 hours in a session of 120 days terminating at 12 o'clock at night to legislation, out of a session of 960 hours. I do not think that is too big a proportion—in fact, in my view, I think it is too small. In the present session it is quite evident that nobody can say the legislative programme of the Government is an inflated or unduly ambitious one, but it is already perfectly evident that we shall have to have an Autumn session. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!" and "Oh, oh!"] Everybody knows that. We shall have to have an Autumn session and also sit more than six months this year. I think it is perfectly preposterous for us to devote more than twenty-six days to the criticism of business in Committee of Supply. It is for these reasons that I beg the House most earnestly not to give up a Rule which I am convinced conduces not merely to the dignity of the House, but to the convenience of discussion and to the certainty of debate at times most convenient to Members. I beg the House not to recur to the old barbarous system under which Supply came on at the most inconvenient period of the year and most inconvenient hours of the day, and was concluded, not because the subjects were exhausted, but because hon. Members who took part in those debates had reached the limit of endurance. That is neither a rational nor a humane principle, and I trust the House will never revert to it.

(11.12.) MR. BRYCE said that, although he had been almost struck dumb by the announcement in April of an Autumn session after an arduous session begun in the month of January, he wished to add a few remarks on a question which he admitted to be one of great difficulty. He would try to inform the right hon. Gentleman why this system which was now proposed was not satisfactory. He agreed that the old system was bad, and it was perfectly true that at present the discussion of the Estimates did not conduce to economy. There was a time when those discussions did conduce to economy, and it was not so long ago as the First Lord of the Treasury appeared to suppose. They all desired that the discussion of the Estimates should tend to economy, and they would all be glad to see a system adopted under which the advocates of economy would have a better chance. The opportunities they desired were withdrawn when discussion was separated from the particular Vote. General discussions were neither satisfactory as discussions on economy or on policy. When this system was introduced six years ago it brought in the automatic closure as the *ultima ratio*, but the idea was that the Estimates should be voted after discussion. They all realised what the expenditure of the country was, and how much more valuable their discussions were, if, after discussing an Estimate, they afterwards proceeded to vote upon it.

His second point was that, although discussions in Supply had ceased to conduce to economy, and had become discussions simply upon policy, they were unsatisfactory even in that respect. It was quite true that the largest issues in connection with the Army and Navy, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office, were discussed in Committee of Supply. If they had a very large question like British policy in China or South Africa or Venezuela without difficulty, they could readily secure discussion upon those questions. There were, however, many questions of secondary importance, such as those which occurred in the Civil Service

Estimates. It constantly happened that, in Committee on the Civil Service Estimates, a small grievance occupied the House for a whole night, to the exclusion of a far more important subject, the Minister not unwilling that a more troublesome question should be deferred, to be possibly disposed of in the final closure. Discussions were not always hostile towards a Minister, and there were many occasions on which they were extremely useful as affording the opportunity for explaining a policy and strengthening the action of a Department. He supposed that there was hardly anybody who had been at the head of a Department in this country who had not felt that to enable him to carry out some reform or other he would very much have liked to have had a discussion in the House. Every now and then it happened that a Minister was obliged to put pressure upon some persons in regard to the administration of the law. He could instance from his own experience at the Board of Trade where it was very often necessary to put pressure upon railway companies and persons connected with shipping. Discussions in this House were very useful for that purpose, and a Minister was very much better able to accomplish his object if he had the pressure of the House of Commons behind him in regard to his position, for this enabled him to judge what the country thought of his policy. Therefore, Ministers would make a great mistake if they thought there was anything to be gained by not taking the House of Commons fully into their confidence.

His case was that under the new Rule that result was not attained, but under the old Rule a subject in which interest was taken would come on for discussion at some time, though perhaps very late in a session and sitting. This was a loss of the present system, and it was not a satisfactory thing for the future to make this a permanent Rule. The right hon. Gentleman last year said it was absurd to lay the same stress now upon the control of the House over finance, because political conditions had entirely changed since the seventeenth century. He said that the instrument whereby the House asserted its power over finance in the seventeenth century had become obsolete in modern times. It was true that things were somewhat different, but the financial centre of gravity had not shifted, and finance was still one of the most imporant duties for which the House was constituted. He thought the House was in great danger of forgetting that the country looked to it to guard finance, to see that money was applied to proper objects, and that expenditure was not suffered to grow extravagant. His complaint against this Rule was that it seemed to recognise as permanent and necessary the evil of extravagance and of insufficient scrutiny which had grown up of late years and which had deprived reformers of the opportunities which they ought to enjoy. In those discussions the noted with regret an undercurrent of pessimism in the mind and in the views of the First Lord of the Treasury which was often found in company with a devotion to philosophic doubt, and it was a pity that the right hon. Gentleman appeared to recognise the evils that at present existed as incurable. He was not yet so despondent, and he hoped that they might get back into a clearer air in which there would be a stronger plea for economy. In spite of the evils of the old system, he wished to say in conclusion that he was reluctant even now to make permanent the Rule which they were at present considering.

*(11.24.) MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) hoped the Government would hold fast to this Rule. The complaint seemed to be that the new system separated the voting from the discussion. So it did in form, but hon. Gentlemen should concentrate their attention more on the substance and less on the form. An Opposition which was prepared to negative entire Votes was prepared to refuse Supply, and an Opposition prepared to refuse Supply would never find any difficulty in challenging the conduct of the Executive Government. Upon one condition only, however, would they always find that opportunity, and that was that they should be prepared to act in some coherent and organised manner among themselves. This Rule was devised mainly for the comfort of the House as a whole, and in a large measure it had succeeded in attaining that end. It had also the object of

securing effective and organised discussion on the Estimates, and the one thing that made it unforgivable to the Opposition was that it threw upon them a new responsibility of a most terrifying nature, viz., that of acting otherwise than in the gelatinous, invertebrate, and totally unorganised manner which had brought them into their present impotent and humiliating condition. The hon. Member for Dundee had declared that the present system stood self-condemned, because a large number of Votes had to be closured at the end of the session. He was not sure that that was the quarter in which the condemnation ought to lie. He had had some experience of appealing to the country against proposals to limit discussions initiated by private Members, and that experience had shown him that such appeals generally fell on deaf ears. Let hon. Members go and tell the country that they, the responsible, organised Opposition, prepared to take the places of His Majesty's present advisers, could not get through the discussion of the Estimates in thirty-six days. They would be laughed at from one end of the country to the other, and be told to go back and manage their business better. The real matter of offence in the Rule was that, in season and out of season, whichever side of the House supplied His Majesty's advisers, it tended to secure that in due time the King's Government should be carried on; and to say that the King's Government should be carried on was the same thing as to say that the government of the great majority of the free and enlightened people of these islands should be carried on as the people wished it to be carried on.

(11.30.) MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.), referring to the previous speaker's remarks on the want of organised action and unity on the part of the Opposition, said that if the hon. Member had been in the House earlier in the afternoon he would have seen all the young talent of the Unionist Party acting in anything but organised unity with the Treasury Bench. The debate had been carried on, and properly so, from the point of view of the inadequacy of the number of days given to the discussion of Irish Estimates. But there was another side of the question, and that was that twenty days were not sufficient for the discussion of English Estimates. The First Lord had argued that if the debates were legitimately conducted, twenty days would be fully sufficient. The right hon. Gentleman could not have been present at the discussion on the previous Friday. An object lesson was then provided as to why twenty days were not sufficient. If time was not wasted by Members on the Government side of the House, with the deliberate intention of preventing a division being taken, twenty days might be sufficient. On the occasion to which he referred, at a certain point in the debate, a message was brought to the Minister in charge of the Vote, which it was easy to interpret as an intimation that Members had not returned from dinner and that it was necessary to continue the discussion in order to secure a majority. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury then turned round and spoke to the hon. Member for Peckham——

* MR. SPEAKER said the hon. Member was entitled to say that discussions were sometimes, in his view, unduly prolonged by Members on the Government side, but he was not entitled to go into elaborate details of a particular scene.

MR. MCKENNA thought he had said enough to illustrate his point. The moment any limit to the number of days was fixed the Government, were enabled to advise their supporters to waste time in order to get Votes through without real criticism. The First Lord had argued that all Members were asked to do was to pass a Rule which for five years had had the sanction of the House. But it was because they had had five years experience of the Rule that they were bound to discuss it and expose its weaknesses. He should certainly vote against it, because it enabled the Government, by putting down uncontroversial Votes or getting their supporters to waste time, to prevent the Opposition having legitimate opportunity of criticising their conduct.

(11.37.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES trusted the announcement of the Leader of the House forboded peace in about a month, the prorogation of Parliament after the Coronation, and an Autumn session in which there would be time to consider matters which were somewhat in arrear. By this time, in his inner mind, the right hon. Gentleman must, he thought, regret his refusal to submit these Rules to a Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: These general questions cannot now be discussed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES thought he would be in order in following his hon. friend in regard to the number of hours in a session. The First Lord was mistaken in reckoning 960 hours to a session of 120 days. Last session extended over only 118 days, but the number of hours was 1,072.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That includes the hours after midnight.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that that was just the point. Even under the new Rules the House would sit many hours after midnight, because there were several matters it would be possible then to discuss. But that was merely a small correction in passing. The Amendment under discussion had been considered in a very business-like manner. Many Members had treated the matter as if it were a question of making permanent the Supply Rule at present existing. That, however, was not the case. The proposal was to make into a Standing Order the Supply Rule, but with most important alterations. At ten o'clock on the two fatal nights the Votes would be lumped together in classes, and the Government would get the whole of their Supply. When he first came into Parliament he studied Parliamentary procedure under the President of the Board of Agriculture, and they then used Supply as an instrument for bargaining with the Government. That was what constantly happened. They used to make bargains behind the Chair and across the floor of the House, and they obtained great concessions in that way, because they had it in their power to prolong business, and consequently they brought the Government to reasonable terms. He need not add that the terms they offered were always reasonable. This Rule of 1896 governing Supply was introduced by his right hon. friend, he was sure, with the best intentions, for he said there had been great scandals in Supply in previous years. He admitted the scandals, for they were in the habit of saying to the

Government that if they did not come to terms they were bound to have those scandals in Supply, and the Government were generally so shocked that they came to terms.

There were some very serious defects in this new Rule. In the first place, it made the number of days allotted to Supply absolutely hard and fast. He thought that was a very dangerous thing to do. It was dangerous to do this in a sessional Order, but it was extremely dangerous to embody this Rule in the form of a Standing Order. How could the Government tell what number of days might be required for Supply one year or two years hence? The business of Supply might grow in greater proportion in the future than legislation, and might require more time. He thought Supply was far more important than legislation, because it gave hon. Members opportunities for criticising the conduct of the Government and endeavouring to secure some little remnant of economy in the administration. If they laid down this Rule in ts present form they would be interfering with the conduct of business in future times. He also wished to point out that at the very time this limitation of the number of days in Committee of Supply was being proposed, the demand had arisen not for fewer but for a larger number of days.

His hon. friend behind him had said that this House, in trying to deal with Supply, was endeavouring to carry a load which it could not bear. He was not quite so sure of that, for he was inclined to believe that if they made a proper arrangement with regard to allocation of days in Supply the House could adequately bear the burden. It was, of course, impossible for the House in any single year to discuss all the Votes in Supply, but he thought the time might be so allocated that in successive years certain Votes might be taken, and ultimately they would get the whole of them considered by the House. Under the present system they went on discussing the same Votes year after year, and the consequence was that some Votes never got discussed at all. He did not agree with the hon. Member for East Mayo that the Estimates could be dealt w th by a Committee, for that was altogether out of the question. He thought, however, that some allocation of time to certain Votes might be made week by week by the Public Accounts Committee. If this could be managed, it would relieve the First Lord of the Treasury of a great deal of responsibility and trouble. [Ministerial cries of "Divide, divide!"] The new Rule, as he had said before, was brought in by the First Lord of the Treasury with the view of preventing certain scandals, but those scandals had been not fewer, but greater, since the Rule was adopted than they were before. [Ministerial interruptions.] Last session between £60,000,000 and £70,000,000 was voted in one sitting, without any discussion at all. [Ministerial cries of "Divide, divide!"] He did not propose to continue this discussion any further beyond stating that he did not think the adoption of this Rule as a Standing Order instead of a sessional Order would conduce to a more adequate discussion in Committee of Supply, and it would most certainly not tend to economy.

(11.48.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 237; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 132.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Augustus H'nry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joseeline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fr'd Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbe, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn L'rd G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'rry
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Camba.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J. (W'lth'mstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gr'h'm (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donal Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Round, James
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, H. C (N'rth'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.

Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H (Ashton-und-Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale.
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (C'rnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Labouchere, Henry
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K'ndal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomas, F. Freeman (Hastings
Thomas, J A (Glamorgan, Gower
Thompson, Dr EC (Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudders'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Lough and Mr. George
Whiteley.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

It being after midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed tomorrow.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 25th April, 1902.

BARON FFRENCH.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on the 21st day of March last, that the right of the Baron Ffrench to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petitions for additional provision in the following Bills—

Weardale and Shildon District Water [H.L.],

Islington and Euston Railway [H.L.],

ought to be dispensed with and leave given to the Committees on the Bills to insert the additional provisions;

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London United Tramways Bill

ought to be dispensed with, provided the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 8 be struck out of the Bill.

Read, and agreed to.

TIVERTON MARKET BILL [H.L.],

Reported, with Amendments.

LONGWOOD GAS BILL [H.L.],

ABERTILLERY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

NORTHUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on 4th of March and 20th of March discharged, and Bill committed.

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL ELECTRIC EXPRESS RAILWAY BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

WEST HAM GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

SWINDON UNITED GAS BILL [H.L.],

WEST HAMPSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

FINEDON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Read 3ª, and passed.

DEVONPORT CORPORATION (GENERAL POWERS) BILL [H.L.],

RENFREW HARBOUR BILL [H.L.],

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

WREXHAM DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON IMPROVEMENT BILL [H.L.],

SADDLEWORTH, SPRINGHEAD, AND LEES TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.],

LEICESTER CORPORATION BILL [H.L.],

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

DOVER HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—

M. Winchester,
L. Stewart of Garlies (*E. Galloway*),
L. Abinger,
L. Congleton,
L. Glanusk (Chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Friday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY (No. 1) BILL [H.L.],

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY (No. 3) BILL [H.L.],

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL [H.L.],

ISLINGTON AND EUSTON RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

CITY AND CRYSTAL PALACE RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

EDGWARE AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

GREAT NORTHERN AND CITY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

GREAT NORTHERN AND STRAND RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY BILL [H.L.],

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—

V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*),
L. Saltoun,
L. Ribblesdale (Chairman),
L. Castletown,
L. Aberdare;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY.

Report of His Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, for the year 1901. Presented (by command); and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.],

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 25th April, 1902.

The House met at Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

RATHMINES AND RATHGAR URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Read a second time and committed.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (SUBWAYS AND TRAMWAYS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 5).

Mr. SEALE HAYNE reported from the Committee on Group No. 5 of Railway Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Tuesday next, at Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Matrimonial Causes Acts, 1857 and 1866, by extending the powers of the Court in

relation to alimony and leave to intervene." (Matrimonial Causes Acts Amendment Bill) [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Chigwell, Loughton, and Woodford Gas Company, and for other purposes." (Chigwell, Loughton and Woodford Gas Bill) [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to provide for the amalgamation of certain schools in or near the city of Waterford; to authorise the establishment of a primary and also of a secondary school in or near the said city; to constitute a governing body for the maintenance and control of the new schools; to vest certain property and endowments in and to confer divers powers for the management of the new schools on the said body, and for other purposes." (Waterford and Bishop Foy Endowed Schools Bill) [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act for attaching a preference to the capital to be issued for the Ballyshannon Extension; for the consolidation and conversion of the capital of the company; to repeal the provisions of former Acts as to separate undertakings; to further extend the time for the completion of the Ballyshannon Extension; to authorise the company to work its undertaking by electricity; and for other purposes." [Donegal Railway Bill (Lords)].

CHIGWELL, LOUGHTON, AND WOODFORD GAS BILL [LORDS],

WATERFORD AND BISHOP FOY ENDOWED SCHOOL BILL [LORDS],

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [LORDS],

Read the first time; and referred to the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

BISHOPRIC OF SOUTHWARK BILL.

Petition from Salisbury, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

Petition from Southampton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCH PARISH COUNCILS BILL.

Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

CLERGY DISCIPLINE BILL.

Petition from Salisbury, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Sutherland and Caithness, against; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Salisbury, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES AND RATING BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Barrowford; and Whitstable; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Southampton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against: From Salisbury and Willesden; to lie upon the Table.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from Eastbourne, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (HOURS OF CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Glasgow in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Hyde (six); Sheffield (four); Gloucester; Barrow-in-Furness; Bournbrook; Blandford; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Chelmsford; Barrowford; Bristol; South-West Lancashire; Stroud; Paddington (ten); Bingley; Oswaldtwistle; and Ormesby; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Two petitions from Dalmarnock, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Return presented relative thereto ordered 24th April; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; o lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 158].

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS (LONDON).

Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 159.]

FLEETS (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Address for "Return showing the Fleets of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, United States of America, and Japan, distinguishing battleships, built and building; cruisers, built and building; coast defence vessels, built and building; torpedo vessels, torpedo boat destroyers, and torpedo boats, built and building."

"Return to show date of launch, displacement, and armaments reduced to one common scale (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 112 of Session 1901)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

(3.35.) *QUESTIONS.*

South African War—Spion Kop Despatches.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that Paper [Cd. 968] of 1902, entitled the Spion Kop Despatches, shows that certain despatches from Lord Roberts, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Charles Warren were altered by His Majesty's Government before publication in the *London Gazette*, so that portions of these despatches were omitted and in some cases other words and sentences substituted for those of the despatches themselves, without anything to show that the despatches as published were not exactly as they were originally written and received, he will state whether any others of the despatches received from military or naval commanders during the campaign and subsequently published have been altered in a similar or in any other manner; if so, will he state what are the published despatches which have been so altered and what the alterations are; will he further state whether any, and, if so, how many despatches have been withheld from publication altogether; and will he also state what was the single sentence criticising Sir Charles Warren which was excised from Sir Redvers Buller's despatches, and does the excision refer to Sir Redvers Buller's detailed remarks extending to seven paragraphs, dated Spearman's Camp, 30th January, 1900, and stated to be not necessarily for publication.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have no information to give my hon. friend in regard to the Question on the Paper.

Loyal Burghers and the Coronation.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the suggestion has been made that representatives of the corps of Loyal Burghers should be invited to the ceremonies of His Majesty's Coronation; whether he has any information showing that such an invitation, if given, would be gladly accepted; and whether he will consider the desirability of giving it.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have not received any suggestion or information of the kind stated in the Question, but I will give the matter consideration.

Hampshire Regiment—Railway Disaster in South Africa.

MR. TANKERVILLE CHAMBERLAYNE (Southampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether

there will be an Inquiry into the causes which led to the recent railway accident in South Africa, in which so many soldiers of the Hampshire Regiment were killed; and whether, if it should be proved that the accident was due to any negligence on the part of those in control of the line or their servants, the families of these men will be in a position to sue for compensation, as they could have done had the accident occurred in England.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): An Inquiry has, I believe, been held, but the report has not yet reached me. The families of the men who have been killed or permanently incapacitated will be treated in the same way as regards pensions as if the men had fallen in action. I am not prepared on the information before me to accept any further liability on the part of the Government.

Soldiers' Clubs.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to Lord Cromer's account of the Soldiers' Club at Cairo in the recent Report on Egypt; and whether he will consider the possibility of establishing similarly-managed clubs at the chief military stations in the United Kingdom and the Colonies.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Soldiers' clubs already exist at Gibraltar and Malta, as well as Cairo. At home it is hoped that the improvements now under consideration in the recreation rooms, which are to all intents and purposes soldiers' clubs, will meet all requirements.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Will the noble Lord say whether the clubs at Malta and Gibraltar are, like the one at Cairo, under the control of the soldiers themselves?

LORD STANLEY: I am afraid I cannot say. I conclude that they are managed in the same way, but I will ascertain.

Army Canteen Committee.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the evidence collected by the Army Canteen Committee, and their Report, will be published; and whether the House will be given an opportunity of discussing the matter before any steps are taken which may involve an alteration of the existing system, or an expenditure of public money.

LORD STANLEY: I am not prepared to make any statement on this subject until the Committee has reported.

Atlantic Shipping Combination—Merchant Steamers under Admiralty Subvention.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the formation of an Atlantic shipping combination or trust, with a capital of £34,000,000, the greater part of which is held in the United States, and the registered offices of the combination in America; whether he has any information showing that twenty-eight British trans-Atlantic steamships are controlled by this combination; if so, how many of these are vessels held at the disposal of the Lords of the Admiralty; and what would be the status of vessels controlled by this foreign combination in time of war.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The answers to the first and second paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question are in the affirmative. Of the vessels at present controlled by the combination, three earn subsidies from the Admiralty, and five are held at the disposal of the Admiralty without subsidy. As I stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Aston Manor, the Question raised in the last paragraph involves important legal points, which are now being considered, and to which I cannot give a reply within the limits of an answer.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask whether there is any reason to believe that any subsidised line, other than the White Star, is willing

to join the combination, and whether the White Star Line, before joining, informed the Admiralty of the intention?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can give no information beyond what I have received officially. With regard to the intentions of any other line, I have received none to the effect suggested by the hon. Member. No notice was given by the White Star Line previously to joining the combination.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): May I ask if there has not been a contravention of the agreement of the White Star Line with the Admiralty?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, as the hon. Member will see if he refers to the agreement.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether arrangements made by an American syndicate to control the Atlantic traffic, involving control of passenger and freight and other charges, and of the movements of vessels, a large proportion of which belong to British companies, have been submitted in any way to the Board of Trade before these arrangements were made; and whether any, and, if so, what steps have been taken, or will be taken, to fully secure the commercial and political interests of the United Kingdom, and to prevent any foreign interference with British shipping which may conflict with the engagements some of these shipping companies have entered into with the Admiralty.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. The matter has occupied and is occupying the attention of the Government. As regards the last paragraph, I can add nothing to the reply given yesterday by my hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty to the effect that the Admiralty has been able to make such an arrangement with the White Star Line as will preclude the possibility of any of their subsidised or retained merchant cruisers being transferred to a foreign flag without the consent of the Admiralty during the unexpired portion of the current subsidy agreement some three years hence.

MR. CHANNING: May I ask whether, under the Merchant Shipping Acts, the Board of Trade has power to require such arrangements affecting the control of steamships to be submitted to the consideration of the Board of Trade?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not aware of any such power.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official information about the recent shipping combination; and, if not, whether he will make inquiries, with a view to determining its effect on British shipping generally.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; the Board of Trade has received no official information on the subject of the recent shipping combination, though a good deal of unofficial information has reached me. The effect of the combination on British shipping generally will receive the careful attention of the Board, but any formal inquiry would appear to me to be premature.

H.M.S. "Medusa."

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the fan engines and fans for supplying forced draught to the stokeholds of H.M.S. "Medusa" are fitted above and to the vessel's protective deck; and if the deck has been cut to allow of air passages being made therein.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The fan engines and fan for supplying forced draught to the stokeholds of the "Medusa" are being fitted above the protective deck, following the practice adopted in other second-class cruisers. The deck has not been cut to allow of air passages being made in it, as the existing air passages have been used.

Tientsin Negotiations.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs whether he can state under what circumstances the Allied Commanders at Tientsin came to deal with conditions on the handing back of territory at Tientsin which affected matters in China as far removed from the sphere of their activity as a district West of Peking; and whether the Allied Ministers at Peking had given their consent to proposals being formulated by the Allied Commanders in reference to such large political questions.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The commanding officers were asked by the diplomatic body what stipulations, from a military point of view, it would, in their opinion, be desirable to make with the Chinese Government, when acceding to the latter's request for the dissolution of the Provisional Government of Tientsin. They were not asked to suggest political conditions. His Majesty's Minister reports that it is not likely that the diplomatic body will be able to give an opinion on the proposals of the commanding officers for a week or ten days.

Atlantic Coast Defence in Florida—Captain Bayley's Action.

*MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any representations have been made to Lord Pauncefote by the State Department at Washington with reference to the conduct of Captain L. Bayley, Naval Attaché to the British Embassy at Washington, in making soundings of harbours and other investigations of the Atlantic coast defences in Florida; whether such acts are in conformity with the practice of military or naval representatives attached to British Embassies; and whether it is intended to recall Captain Bayley.

LORD CRANBORNE: No such complaint has been addressed to His Majesty's Embassy by the United States Government, and we are informed there is no foundation for the reports that Captain Bayley had committed any irregularity.

*MR. MACVEAGH: My authority is the London *Times*.

Merchant Shipping—Nocturnal Code Signalling.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is in the contemplation of the Board to encourage the adaptation of the new international code of signals, by means of lamps, for service during the night, corresponding to that by flags during the day, so that in cases of accident or breakdown of machinery in steamers they could be signalled to passing steamers as well by day as by night; and, seeing that Captain Fairweather, of the S.S. "Vortigern," has submitted to the Board a system of nocturnal code signalling enabling vessels to communicate with each other, or to lighthouse and shore stations, and requiring only one lamp in addition to those now used, so that the initial expense would only amount to a few shillings, whether the Board has considered, or will consider, the expediency of this system of night signalling at sea being generally adopted in the merchant service.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A system of signalling at night by means of flashes of light or blasts of sound according to the Morse Code is already included in the revised edition of the International Code of Signals. That system was adopted by the Committee which revised the International Code, on the recommendation of the Washington Maritime Conference held in 1889, it being the opinion of that Conference that night signalling at sea can better be carried out by a system of long and short flashes from a white light than by any system—such as that of Captain Fairweather—in which coloured lights are used. Having regard to that opinion, and to all the circumstances, the Board of Trade are not prepared to take steps for the adoption by the Mercantile Marine of any system of signalling at night by means of coloured lights.

Poor Law Act, 1899.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the International Conference on the Welfare and Protection of Children, to be held in London next July, he will now

cause to be prepared a Return of the number of Boards of Guardians who have put the Poor Law Act, 1899, in force, and the number of children adopted under its provisions.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I am not at present in possession of the information desired, but I should be happy to obtain it from the several Boards of Guardians. This I should propose to do in connection with their next half-yearly Returns of Pauperism, so as to avoid the necessity of troubling them to make a separate Return.

Cape Mail Delays.

MR. TANKERVILLE CHAMBERLAYNE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the steamers carrying the mails between Southampton and Cape Town could make the passage in about two days less time than they do, and that they are purposely delayed so that they shall not arrive at either place before a certain day; and also that the times for arrival and departure on both sides are so arranged that it is impossible to reply to despatches or correspondence from places at any distance from the ports till a week or more has elapsed; and, whether, having regard to the importance (especially at the present time) of expediting as much as possible the communication between Great Britain and South Africa, representations will be made to the Cape Government with a view to prevent this delay and inconvenience.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The Postmaster General is aware that some of the steamers employed in the service in question could make the voyage more quickly than they do; but the contract is for a transit time of 16 days and 20 hours in each direction, with a departure from this country on Saturday and from Cape Town on Wednesday. Hence there are no grounds on which the Postmaster General could make the representations suggested.

Education Schemes.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, in view of the fact that the Education Bill before the House, if passed this session, will modify the object for which the aid grant is applied for under the schemes of the Voluntary Schools Associations, and in order to provide for the possibility of the Education Bill not being passed by the 1st of July, the date at which the schemes must now be sent to the Board of Education, whether the Board would consent to defer the date when the schemes must be sent in until the 1st of September.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I am informed that the sending in of schemes cannot be postponed beyond the usual time without risk of schools not receiving their grant within the financial year.

Education in the United States.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state when the tenth volume of the Educational Series, being that relating to education in the United States of America, will be in the hands of Members.

SIR J. GORST: I am unable to say when it will be in the hands of Members. It is not yet printed.

Cattle Maiming in County Galway.

COLONEL M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received any report as to an outrage which occurred near Ballinsloe, County Galway, on Thursday, the 17th instant, wherein some eleven head of cattle were found by the herd to have had their tails cut off during the night, and were bleeding profusely, the beasts being also daubed with paint; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with the outrage.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Yes, Sir, I have received particulars of

this shocking outrage. The number of cattle injured was ten, not eleven. No arrests have yet been made.

COLONEL M'CALMONT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if a meeting of the United Irish League has not been held close to the scene of the outrage, at which resolutions denouncing the proprietor of the grazing land were passed.

MR. WYNDHAM: As the owner of the cattle which have been treated in this abominable way is seeking compensation by legal process, I think it would be improper here to discuss the circumstances.

*MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): May I ask whether this outrage was not committed by the police?

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us more definite information as to where the outrage took place?

MR. WYNDHAM: It is impossible for me to discuss these questions here. Full inquiry will, no doubt, be made.

MR. ROCHE: I only want to know definitely where it took place.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must decline to go into the particulars at all.

Religious Opinions of Irish Judges.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of High Court Judges, County Court Judges, and Resident Magistrates in Ireland; and how many in each class profess the religious faith of the majority of the Irish people.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no official knowledge of the religious denominations of Judges of the High Court, or of County Court Judges. Any information open to me on the subject would be derived from unofficial sources, which are equally open to the hon. Member. With respect to Resident Magistrates, of the sixty-eight now serving, nineteen are Roman Catholics.

Rainsford v. Browne.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of Rainsford v. Browne, tried in February last in Dublin before the Chief Baron and a special jury; and whether, in view of the questions of constitutional law and of the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts when the country is in a state of rebellion involved in this case, he will lay upon the Table the charge of the Lord Chief Baron to the jury, together with his notes of evidence and the pleadings in the case.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no report of the Chief Baron's charge in this case, nor are his notes of the evidence available. For these reasons, if for no other, it is not possible to comply with the wishes of the hon. Member.

MR. DILLON: How is it there is no report in this important case, seeing there is always one in the case of coercion proceedings?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed it is not usual to take notes of the Judge's charge to the Grand Jury.

MR. DILLON: Has the right hon. Gentleman applied to the Lord Chief Baron?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am told that his notes are not available.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S): A full report appeared in one of the Dublin papers. I have seen it.

Inspection of Irish Poor Law Children.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the appointment of lady inspector of boarded-out children in Ireland has been made; and, if so, will he state the qualifications of the lady selected for the position.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes. Mrs. Dickie. I formed a high opinion of that lady's qualifications when submitted to me. I have asked for a copy of them to be forwarded to me again, and I will communicate it to the hon. Baronet.

Borrisoleigh Affray.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of an occurrence which took place on the evening of Wednesday the 16th instant, at Borrisoleigh, North Tipperary, when Mr. William Carrol, honorary secretary to the United Irish League, while on his lawful business in the street, was attacked, pushed into the roadway, and knocked down in the mud by the police, although there was no disturbance or any assembly in the street at the time; also that, on demanding the cause of such treatment, Mr. Carroll was a second time assaulted, called opprobrious names, and beaten by the police, having to run for safety to his home; and will he cause a full inquiry to be held into all the circumstancse of the case.

MR. WYNDHAM: The occurrence to which the Question presumably refers took place on the 9th, not the 16th instant. On the former date a force of police was leaving the village, when they encountered a disorderly crowd, who groaned and hooted them. Mr. Carroll was at the head of this crowd. The District Inspector who was present, assures me he was not ill-treated, and that he made no inquiry as to the cause of his treatment. Mr. Carroll is reported to me to have been violent in his conduct, and the police, believing that a breach of the peace was imminent, considered it desirable to remove him to his own house. I have no information before me that the police used more force than was necessary on the occasion. But if any representations are made in writing by Mr. Carroll, and forwarded to me, I will cause further inquiry to be made.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN: Mr. Carroll is prepared to depose on oath to everything stated in the Question.

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act—Proclamation.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the clauses of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, recently revived by proclamation, are to be made retrospective in their operation.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Perhaps I may be permitted to reply to this Question. If the hon. Member will refer to Section 5 of the Statute he will see that Sections 2, 3, and 4 apply to offences committed before the proclamation. Section 11, however, limits this period to six months before the proclamation in respect of offences prescribed under Section 2.

MR. O'DOWD: But a number of prisoners have been tried under Section 1.

Road Widening in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether, in view of the inconvenient and expensive procedure to acquire land, otherwise than by consent, for the purpose of widening old or making new roads, especially in instances where the land required is poor and the damage insignificant, prescribed by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, the Government will consider the advisability of repealing Section 10 of the said Act, and of substituting the speedier and less expensive procedure by which compensation was fixed under Section 134 of 6 and 7 Will. 4, Chapter 116.

MR. ATKINSON: The provisions of this section were fully discussed and carefully considered in the progress through Committee of the Local Government Bill, and I cannot hold out any hope that the Government will be willing to substitute for the procedure provided by it, the procedure theretofore existing, which was considered inapplicable to the new condition of things.

Killaloe Postmastership.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that there is a vacancy for Postmaster in Killaloe, County Clare; whether any appointment has yet been made; and, if so, will he say who has been appointed; if not, whether he will see that the views of the people of Killaloe are considered and complied with when making the appointment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. James White was appointed to be Sub-Post-master of Killaloe a fortnight ago.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is he a native of the town?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not know.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Was he a policeman or a prison warder?

[No answer was returned.]

Irish Land Bill.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, after the Second Reading of the Irish Land Act he will consent to refer the Bill for consideration to a Joint Committee of the Irish Members of the Houses of Lords and Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The proposal made by the hon. Member is not of a character which could be entertained on a Bill of this kind.

Business of the House.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is it intended to take the Second Reading of the Land Bill before or after Whitsuntide?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR; There is not the smallest chance of its being taken before Whitsuntide.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): What will be the business in the latter half of next week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not give an absolute pledge, but probably the discussion of the Procedure Rules will be continued on Thursday. It is possible I may have to ask the House to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule on Tuesday and Thursday.

MR. DILLON: On behalf of the hon. Member for Kilkenny, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that there will be an Autumn Session of Parliament this year, he can indicate the probable dates and length of the recess at Whitsuntide and at the Coronation, and the date on which this Session will close.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give any definite reply to this Question, but the House must not expect a very long holiday at Whitsuntide.

MR. DILLON: I hope there will be favourable consideration to the suggestion that in view of an Autumn Session the present session will not be prolonged.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am anxious to meet the wishes of the House as far as I can; but I confess it seems to me that any difficulty in getting through the business will be due, not to the Government, but the manner in which discussion is carried on by hon. Members.

Privilege—Attachment Order against Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, M.P.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I wish to bring under the attention of the House a matter of privilege. Yesterday, Sir, you communicated to the House a letter which you had received from one of the Judges in Ireland informing this House that an order of attachment had been issued against Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, a Member of this House. Now there have been, as far as I can find out, only about four cases of this kind within recent times in the House of Commons, and in each case the question was treated as a matter of privilege and a Motion was submitted to the House appointing a Committee to inquire into the circumstances. I have looked into the cases with some care, and I find, with reference at any rate to one of the cases in the past the hon. Member in question was not in custody, and had not been arrested at the time the Motion was brought forward. It was the case of Mr. Charlton against whom an attachment was issued in the year 1837. The last case which came before the House was in the year 1882, and on that occasion Mr. Gladstone, who was then the Leader of the House, immediately rose and stated that the responsibility and duty rested upon him as Leader of the House of making a Motion in regard to the letter which had been received, announcing the issue of the Order. He moved in that case that the

letter should be laid on the Table of the House, because, as a matter of fact, the date upon which the letter was communicated to the House was the very day before the adjournment, and Mr. Gladstone pointed out that it was impossible for the House to appoint a Committee to deal with the matter before the adjournment. He made a Motion that the letter lie on the Table, and when the House reassembled in the following October, on the very first day of its meeting the right hon. Gentleman followed the invariable precedent in every case which had occurred for at least 100 years or more and moved that a Committee be appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the case, and to report to the House thereupon. I propose, if I gather from you, Mr. Speaker, that the course is in order, to shortly state the facts to the House, and to conclude by bringing forward such a Motion as has been moved in previous cases.

*MR. SPEAKER: My impression was and is that no question of privilege arises until a Member is prevented from attending the service of the House. The making of an Order of Attachment is one thing, the actual arrest is another. In the case of Mr. Gray, which was referred to by the hon. and learned Member, when Mr. Gladstone made the Motion for a Committee, the learned Judge had reported that Mr. Gray had been committed under an Order for Attachment, and, although I believe he was subsequently released, he had actually been committed during the sittings of the House; therefore it appears that a question of privilege did arise. I am not aware of the circumstances of the case of Mr. Charlton, to which the hon. and learned Member refers, whether it appears that in that case—perhaps the hon. and learned Member will tell me—there had been an arrest or committal.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It appears that in the case of Mr. Charlton the attachment had been issued, but he had not been arrested. As a matter of fact the report of the proceedings commenced with the reading out of a letter received by Mr. Speaker from the hon. Member in question, stating that an attachment had been issued against him, and that he was in fear if it were executed that he would be prevented from performing his Parliamentary duties. Therefore he asked that the House should take cognisance of the Order which had been made against him.

*MR. SPEAKER: Do I understand that the Attachment Order in that case was made by an English Court, and that Mr. Charlton was in England at the time?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Yes, it was made by the Lord Chancellor of England, and Mr. Charlton wrote to the House from an hotel in Palace Yard.

*MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Charlton, then, was clearly in immediate danger of apprehension. This case seems to be somewhat different. I believe the fact is that the hon. Member for North Leitrim, as long as he is in England, is not liable to arrest under the Order of Attachment, and he can go on actually serving in this House. As a matter of fact he is so serving, for yesterday he presented a Bill. It appears to me that under these circumstances there is no present case of privilege. If he is arrested, then a question of privilege will arise, and the hon. Member will be in a position to make the Motion, if it is not done by the Leader of the House.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Of course, Sir, I must accept your decision, and I take it the effect is that inasmuch as a Writ of Attachment has been issued by an Irish Court, it cannot be executed in England. Therefore the hon. Member against whom it has been issued is in no immediate danger of having his Parliamentary duties interfered with. The question of privilege we are told does not arise at the moment, but it will arise when the hon. Member is arrested, if ever he should be arrested.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is my view. Of course, if I am right in the view I have expressed, that an Order of Attachment made in Ireland cannot be executed in this country, it is quite possible that the hon. Member for North Leitrim may remain free from arrest the whole session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I interpolate this observation? I have carefully considered the cases brought forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and I shall consider it my duty as Leader of the House, and in obedience to precedent, to move for a Committee if the hon. Member is attached.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: May I be allowed to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman? He says that he has carefully inquired into the case. Has he taken the advice of the legal advisers of the Government, and is he prepared to endorse the view of the law laid down by Mr. Speaker, namely, that the Attachment cannot be executed while the hon. Member for North Leitrim remains in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Any statement of mine on the subject cannot be regarded as carrying with it the smallest authority, but I believe that Mr. Speaker's view of the law is regarded as absolutely correct.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That was not my question. The right hon. Gentleman says he has inquired into the case. I want to know if he has taken the advice of the law officers of the Crown.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I ought to be asked to go further than I have done. If the hon. and learned Member means have I submitted a case for the consideration of the law officers of the Crown in a formal way, I may say that I have not taken any such step, but I have, of course, consulted my hon. and learned friends.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection. That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: — Mr. Garfit; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Loder.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE VOLUNTEERS BILL.

"To amend Section 1 of the Royal Naval Reserve Volunteer Act, 1896," presented by Mr. Arnold-Forster, under Standing Order 31; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 171.]

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Qualification and Tenure of Office of Medical officers of Health and Inspectors, and to make further provisions relating to superannuation allowances for such officers and Inspectors; and for other purposes," presented by Sir Francis Powell, under Standing Order 31; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Talbot, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and Sir Michael Foster; to be read a second time upon Monday, 12th May, and to be printed. [Bill 172.]

PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS.

"To make further and amended provisions to prevent the Pollution of Rivers and Streams," presented by Sir Francis Powell, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Wilson-Todd, Mr. Henry Hobhouse; Sir John Dorington, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster; to be read a second time upon Monday, 12th May, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Dillon, under Standing Order 31; supported by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Lecky, Mr. Boland, and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; to be read a second tim upon Friday next, and to be printed [Bill 174.]

NEW PROCEDURE RULES.

[ELEVENTH DAY'S DEBATE.]

NEW STANDING ORDER (BUSINESS IN SUPPLY).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [11th April], "That as soon as the Committee of Supply has

been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the Day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Not more than twenty days, being days before the 5th of August, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the Chair, or any day on which the business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

"Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any Vote of Credit, or of Votes for Supplementary or Additional Estimates presented by the Government for War Expenditure, shall not be included in the computation of the Twenty days aforesaid.

"Provided also that on Motion made after Notice by a Minister of the Crown, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforesaid, either before or after the 5th of August.

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply, shall, except on the last two of the allotted days, be taken before midnight unless it is unopposed, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the Report of that Vote. At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

"At Ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner, put severally the questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments, be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

"At Ten of the clock on the last allotted day, the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the Report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the question, That the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other outstanding Resolutions severally.

"On the days appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business.

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed.

"For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two Sittings."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Main Question again proposed.

*(4.5.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said the First Lord of the Treasury, in the debate on the previous night, expressed a hope that what had taken

place on the Second Reading debate would obviate the necessity of going into this Rule in very great detail. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, and but for one or two observations which had dropped from him he would have been inclined to withdraw his Amendment altogether. He might be able to take that course later on, but he did deem it necessary, in the interests of Irish Supply, that Irish Members should have some further statement on this matter from the First Lord. The right hon. Gentleman made a very extraordinary statement. First he said, practically, that Irish debates in Supply were all nonsense —that he admitted was a rough and ready way of putting the right hon. Gentleman's argument. He said that no Irish Member was in favour of reducing a single Vote by a single 6d. paid out of the Saxon Treasury. He deemed that an extraordinary statement for a reason which might not be known to every Member of the House, viz., that in these Irish Votes for the up-keep of the Irish Government there was not a single sixpence extracted from the pockets of the Saxon taxpayer. Of course the Leader of the House knew that perfectly well, he had only adopted a pleasant way of putting a disagreeable fact. As these taxes then were paid solely out of the pockets of the Irish taxpayers, surely the Irish Members had a right to a fair and adequate opportunity for discussing the methods of Irish Government. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that the discussions in Committee of Supply upon either Irish or English questions did not influence the State Departments concerned—although a reduction might never be carried—in framing the Estimates, or that it did not influence the Treasury in considering the Estimates so framed? He ventured to say that any Member who had at any time been in a Department of the State knew perfectly well that the permanent officials paid the closest attention to the debates in the House, and that the Treasury did the same. There was a good deal in what the hon. Member for East Mayo said on the previous night about the tendency of this Rule being probably in the direction of lessening the interest in these debates in Supply, but at the same time it could not be denied that they were of the greatest service in influencing the permanent officials of the Departments in framing the Estimates for the year. If the right hon. Gentleman meant that the discussions had no effect, what was the logical conclusion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never for a moment suggested that the discussions in Supply had no effect. What I said was that, as far as my own observations go, discussions on Supply very seldom are in the direction of economy, they constantly point in the direction of increased expenditure.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said his point was that even in the three or four days now allotted to Irish Supply the discussions that took place were, so far as Ireland was concerned, of the greatest importance to that country. He would give the House one example.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman misrepresents me. In the observations I made I was addressing myself to the argument of the hon. Member for East Mayo, an argument which had nothing whatever to do with Ireland, but which dealt with the general effect of our discussions in Supply on the economical side. I never said they were unimportant, on the contrary I think their importance is enormous.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said the right hon. Gentleman argued that in the three or four days allotted to Irish Supply there was plenty of time to denounce everybody from the Lord Lieutenant down to the humblest policeman. That seemed to him at all events to convey the impression that the time was not very profitably occupied. He would put out one case, however, where the debate had been of enormous service. Members of the House had for years been seeking an opportunity of dealing with the Land Judge's Court in Ireland. They were unable to do so until last year when by an arrangement with hon. Members opposite he secured a portion of one of the three allotted days for the purpose. What happened? A debate of two hours duration took place

and the result had been that the Land Judge's Court had been entirely transformed. There was not a solicitor practising in the Court who did not admit that. The Land Judge himself had taken the bull by the horns and had framed a new set of rules with the result that the intention of Parliament in passing the Land Act of 1896 was now in a fair way of being carried out, whereas before it was simply blocked by officials of every kind. It was all very well to talk about denouncing people in the short time allotted for Supply, but he maintained that that time was not spent in denouncing any body; it was spent in denouncing public scandals. His complaint was that there were a great many such scandals in Ireland, and that three days was too short a period for exposing them. Another hon. Member who spoke on the previous night blamed Irish Members for wasting the time of the House. He was perhaps a new Member, for he said he noticed that on one occasion the Irish Members were discussing a Vote of £46,000 for Irish Local Government, and he thought that a contemptible thing. As a fact they were occupying one of the days allotted to Irish Supply. The hon. Gentleman went on to remark that eventually the Closure was moved, and he was reluctant to vote for it: he did not know he would vote for it again under similar circumstances. But he failed to realise that the Irish Members were discussing a great Department of the State in Ireland, a Department which pre-eminently required discussion, because it was carrying out one of the greatest revolutions that had ever taken place in Ireland since the Act of Union was passed.

If hon. Members made it a ground of complaint that Irish Supply was discussed in this handful of allotted days, they were absolutely establishing the case for Home Rule. What was the great argument of the Duke of Devonshire in 1886. It was that the Imperial Parliament was alike able and willing to do everything for Ireland that ought to be done, far better than it could be done by an Irish Assembly. That was the very foundation of the case for Unionism, and now, when complaint was being made of the manner in which Irish Members used their allotted days, they were fighting against the very basis of the Unionist principle, and they were handing over to hon. Members opposite the greatest possible argument for Home Rule. As regarded Irish Supply, they were endeavouring to crowd into three allotted days the whole administration of Ireland for twelve months. Was not that an absurdity as well as an impossibility? What did it mean? Take the case of the Irish police? He had known and the First Lord of the Treasury had known the Police Vote itself to take three days. The Chief Secretary's Vote had taken three days when the right hon. Gentleman was Chief Secretary for Ireland. They had happily fallen now on quieter times, and he was far from saying that anything like three days was now necessary, but let the House look the question squarely in the face. The Government had suspended the Constitution over nine counties in Ireland, and if they were going to coerce—he was not saying whether it was right or wrong—they must expect as a natural result that there would be objections raised to their action. The right of public meeting was one of the most sacred rights possessed by the citizens of this country. The Government were prohibiting public meetings in Ireland they were proclaiming them, and that must cause friction which would be felt in the House of Commons. If the friction had not a reasonable outlet in Committee of Supply it would find an outlet in some other way. Now he was far more interested in the Irish Land Commission than in either the police or the magistracy. What were the facts with regard to the Land Commission? That great administrative body cost £150,000 a year for its mere up-keep. When had they last an opportunity of discussing it in the House? The right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, would reply that as he left the selection of Irish Supply to Irish Members they alone were responsible for not having discussed it. But they could only have put the Vote forward at the expense of some other Vote and they naturally chose those they believed to be the more pressing and the more

urgent. If he was not mistaken there had been no discussion in the House of Commons on the Irish Land Commission for two years. Could anything be more extraordinary than that? The whole methods of the Commission were distrusted by every class in Ireland. The landlords, maintained the right hon. Gentleman, were being ruined by the decisions of the Commission and it was no satisfaction to them to be told that they were being ruined by due process of law. The tenants on the other hand maintained that they were the victims. There were grievances in this respect in every part of Ireland, in Ulster as well as elsewhere, and yet more than two years had elapsed since the Vote for the Land Commission was debated in the House. That was, he ventured to assert, something approaching a public scandal. The other Departments of the State were in the same position. Law charges were certainly discussed last year, but under that Vote something fresh cropped up every year. There were in all thirteen contentious Irish Votes and they were never able to discuss more than three or four in any one session. His whole case was either the House was able and willing to secure the discussion of the Government of Ireland or it was not. There was not a Member of that House who would venture to defend the proposition that the whole Government of Ireland could be discussed in three days, and that was the ground on which he based his Amendment. He had purposely refrained from taking any part in the debates on the Rules of Procedure. He did not want it to be said that he had attempted to obstruct the Government in that matter and had thus delayed Irish legislation, but he ventured to say that if this House was to go on governing Ireland—and for his part he hoped it would continue to do so—it must be prepared to give adequate opportunity to the representatives of Ireland to fairly criticise the methods of Government. If they were not prepared to do that then they were furnishing hon. Members opposite with the most potent weapon for Home Rule that could be placed in their hands.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 8, after the word 'Account,' to insert the words 'and not less than five of these days shall be allotted to Irish Supply.'" —(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question proposed—"That those words be there inserted."

(4.25.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he was very glad that an Amendment raising so vital a question as to the amount of time that should be allotted for the discussion of Irish Supply had been moved by an hon. Member who had been, for certainly fifteen years, the stoutest and ablest champion of Unionism in Ireland. He was not surprised in the least that a man so skilled in Parliamentary warfare should see that that question of the adequate discussion of Irish Government had a most important and vital bearing on the question of Home Rule, because their contention all along had been that Parliament was so overweighted with business that the Irish Members could not get a sufficient hearing for all the grievances under which Ireland laboured in consequence of its centralised Government—centralised infinitely beyond anything the English or Scotch Members could understand. The hon. Member for South Tyrone naturally feared that the operation of this Rule would bring home to the minds of the Irish people with greater force than ever, the absurdly farcical idea that the Imperial Parliament was really dealing honestly with their grievances. It would become apparent to all classes that Ireland was living under an uncontrolled bureaucracy. He wished he could bring home to hon. Members, who desired to consider this with a fair mind, the enormous difference that existed between the conditions obtaining in Ireland and those which prevailed in England, Scotland and Wales. The whole system of government in Ireland was so radically different from that obtaining elsewhere, that the amount of time in Committee of Supply which would be adequate for Great Britain would be utterly and manifestly inadequate in Ireland, as anyone who understood the conditions of the country would admit.

He would just illustrate that by one or two cases. Take first the case of the police. In England, Scotland and

Wales the police system was a local system, and where grievances existed against the police they were dealt with by local committees, and seldom, if ever, came before Parliament. Only the other day there was a great riot in Birmingham, and serious allegations were made against the police there. But the Police Committee of the City of Birmingham made most careful elaborate inquiry into the whole question. The dispute was settled on the spot, and the matter never came before Parliament. That was the system which obtained throughout Scotland, England and Wales. But what was the case in Ireland? There they had a great force. The Irish Constabulary was practically a military force, governed by military officers, and centralised under a government officer in the castle, over whose operations no one in Ireland had the smallest control. The consequence was that wherever there was a grievance or a riot, or any kind of disturbance, they had absolutely no remedy except to come to Parliament; and when they did that all they could do was to put down a question to the Chief Secretary. What followed? The question was sent across to the very policeman who was accused, and his answer was accepted by the Minister and read out to the House as a full and adequate reply. They were utterly unable, either in Ireland or in the House, owing to the Rules, to bring forward any of the grievances which they had against the police, and there never was a police force in the world which could be trusted to do its duty and to exercise its functions without criticism and without inquiry. Yet, here they had a great military force in Ireland which, owing to the operations of the Rules and to the congested state of Parliamentary business, was absolutely unchecked and uncontrolled, and that in a country where passion ran very high, and where collisions between the police and the people were of very frequent occurrence. That was a most contentious and most important department of public administration, and the difficulty they found in debating it was only one illustration of the enormous difference between Great Britain and Ireland.

He would give another illustration. In Great Britain the ordinary administration of the country was carried out in accordance with the general feelings and opinions of the majority. That was a fair proposition which nobody could deny. It was checked and controlled by the opinions of the majority of the Members of the House, and no Ministry responsible for the administration would refuse to be influenced by those opinions But when they came to Ireland they were face to face with a radically and totally different state of affairs. He was not going to argue the question whether it was right or wrong that Ireland should be ruled against the will of four-fifths of the people. But the fact was undoubted that the Executive Government in Ireland was out of sympathy with, hostile to, and at cross purposes with public opinion in the country, and with the ideas, desires, wishes, and needs of the people. Whatever hon. Members might think necessary for the unity and interests of the Empire that was a great fact to which they ought not to shut their eyes. And if the House really desired and honestly endeavoured to carry out the task of governing Ireland justly and fairly, the representatives of the Irish people ought to be granted a much larger scope for expressing their views in regard to the government of their own country Their only opportunity at present was in Committee of Supply. He had to complain of the tone of the right hon. Gentleman, the First Lord of the Treasury, both on that and on previous occasions, when he suggested to them as a suitable way of using their three allotted days of supply to abuse the Chief Secretary who, at the end of the time would be happy, as they should be. That was turning the whole thing into a farce, and intimating that they were fools who had come over to this country without the slightest knowledge of what was necessary for the people who sent them. It was deliberately said that the whole question of Irish Supply was nonsense, that the time was devoted to silly and purposeless abuse, and that nobody paid the slightest attention to what the Irish Members said. That, however was not their view. If they did not often succeed in achieving very much by their debates, still they did achieve something. There could not be the slightest doubt that the very moment the debate took place, long over due as it was, and only brought

about by arrangement between themselves and the hon. Member for South Tyrone, a great reform was affected in the Land Judge's Court. That institution was one of the most monstrous excrescences that had grown out of the Irish system. It so utterly falsified its whole history, as well as the intentions of the legislation which gave it birth, that it became a monstous scandal. But a considerable improvement was apparent immediately after the discussion on its methods took place in the House of Commons.

There could not be the slightest doubt, that, utterly insufficient as was the opportunity they had to deal with police questions in Ireland, debates in that House had some slight effect—he admitted it was very slight—in checking the operations of the Constabulary, and they had been able, in some instances, to bring some of those gentlemen to book. He would ask hon. Members to keep one fact in mind. If they succeeded once in ten years in getting an officer or official dismissed for some gross dereliction of duty that example had the most extraordinary effect on the whole department for years to come, and therefore it must not be supposed that because their discussions were vague, they were idle. They once succeeded in getting an Irish resident magistrate dismissed and disgraced in connection with the Mitchelstown affair, and did they imagine for a single moment that there was not a magistrate in Ireland who did not remember that man's fate? There never was a country in the world where public officers and permanent officials, if left without the check of public opinion for a certain number of years would not lapse into bad methods and abuse the authority with which they were entrusted. Now, he would turn to the case of the magistracy. There they had another instance of the enormous difference between the Government of Ireland and of this country. One might sit in the House of Commons for ten years and not hear a case brought forward condemnatory of the action of an English magistrate. Why? Because English magistrates were men whose conduct did not naturally come before Parliament. They received no salaries, and the whole of that department of English administration was removed from the purview of the House of Commons. But in Ireland the whole magisterial jurisdiction ought properly to be surveyed every year, if justice was to be done. There they had a body of men whose salaries were charged on the Votes of the House, whose conduct was continually the subject of complaint—in many instances he thought just complaint — and in regard to whom criticism in the House afforded the only real means of exercising a moderating influence. It was absurd to say that such criticism was not necessary, for they had had some very instructive debates with reference to the action of the Irish magistrates.

There was another department of the Irish Government which had been alluded to by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and which was unknown in Great Britain. In regard to that they had literally had a great revolution—such a revolution as, in his deliberate opinion, had never been carried out in any other country without very violent disturbance. They had had the whole ownership of the land altered and changed, and the work of centuries undone, by a Commission which cost from £150,000 to £200,000 a year, and the work of which was a subject of perpetual complaint. The House had before it almost every second year an Irish Land Bill, and the whole country was the prey of a swarm of enormously able lawyers who helped to render the land system both difficult and expensive. The Irish were supposed to be a purely agricultural people, but the one industry on which the whole fabric of their social prosperity was built, was subject to such a system of legislation and confusion and uncertainty that it would be a miracle if Ireland was anything else than it was—a miserable country. If there was a system in England comparable to the system of the Land Commission in Ireland, a week or a fortnight would be devoted to its operations every session: yet because it was in Ireland it was not discussed, and it was not until a new Land Bill was introduced, which was always positively to be the last, and which yet only continued for about three years, that the House woke up to the fact that the Irish Land question was still with them. That was a department which struck at the root of the social structure of Ireland, and yet owing to the system

of Supply which prevailed, it was allowed to continue year after year without any discussion at all. The Leader of the House had said again and again that he had never in recent years heard a discussion in Supply which had the slightest effect in promoting economy, or that such a discussion was the least use in that direction. He himself held a totally different view. The difficulty which existed, before the present Rule was introduced, of pulling Supply through the House, had a great effect on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Irish Departments. Ministers when asked to increase the Estimates always answered that they had the House of Commons to face, and that they would be kept there God only knew how long. He was, he was sorry to say, a very old man in Committee of Supply, and he had not the slightest doubt that the wholesome fear of Committee in Supply, and the difficulty of getting Votes through had a very considerable effect in checking Ministers when called upon by the permanent heads of Departments to increase the Estimates. What was at the root of the extravagance of public expenditure in Ireland? Dean Swift published a little phamphlet in which he showed that a set of propositions, political, social, and economical, which were accepted all over the world, were reversed in Ireland. Ireland was the poorest country in Europe, practically speaking, and was yet the most extravagantly governed country in the world. That was a fact which ought to weigh in the House. Scotland, a country full of great urban communities which required a greater police force than poor rural districts in Ireland, had only 5,000 police, whereas Ireland in a population now reduced below that of Scotland, had 13,000 armed police, excluding the Dublin Metropolitan Police, or altogether three times the number of police Scotland had.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now going more into detail regarding methods of Government in Ireland than will be in order on this Amendment. The Amendment is that a certain number of days shall be allotted to Irish Supply, but the hon. Member is renewing the discussion of last night on the *general question.*

MR. DILLON said he did not intend to enter into details, but he dared say he had travelled too far on a subject in which he was greatly interested. The Leader of the House said that whatever might be the use of discussion in Supply in controlling the Executive action of the Government, it was of no use in promoting economy. He wished to show that Ireland was a country which required economy in administration, because it was the most extravagantly governed part of the three kingdoms, not at the expense of the Saxon taxpayers but of the wretched people in Ireland themselves who were awfully taxed, the money being squandered in the most reckless fashion by the Irish Departments. In his opinion the First Lord of the Treasury took a very narrow view of the whole question. Economy in the last resort in the internal administration of a country rested on the Government, and discussion in Supply, even when not directed to making reductions, if it were productive of, or tended to produce good administration, thereby tended to produce economy. For instance, if the Land Commission and the other Departments concerned could have been brought to end up their work, it would be possible on the day when the land question was settled to reduce the expense of the Constabulary by £1,000,000. Would not that be a great piece of economy? Therefore, he maintained that the First Lord of the Treasury looked at the question from a narrow and a shallow point of view, when he considered that discussion on Supply did not effect economy, because there might not, at the moment, be a reduction of the Vote. Everything that tended to improve administration, in efficiency, honesty, or purity, was making for economy; and, therefore, he said for all the reasons he had stated—the peculiar condition of the Government; the fact that the country was governed by a body of men out of sympathy with the population; the extravagance of that Government at the expense of the Irish and not the English taxpayer; and the peculiar difficulties of the Irish Members in the House, who were not in any way on intimate relations with the Government—Ireland was entitled to a

Mr. Dillon.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I regret that I should have made the mistake. Some hon. Members think it is better done by the Leader of the House, and some think it would be better done by a Committee.

MR. DILLON: From the beginning I have been in favour of leaving it in the hands of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It seems to be the general sense of the House that that duty should be left in the hands of the Leader of the House. I do not take that as being in any way a compliment to myself, but it is a great compliment to the House itself and to the position which I hold. It shows that the fears as to what will happen when other Governments come into power are really vain. I often hear suggestions of the flagitious things which are to be done by my successor in office. Well I quite admit that my successor in this House will be responsible, or at least will suggest, a great deal of iniquitous legislation, and I take the darkest view of his character from that point of view, but no man speaking from this Bench will ever dare to refuse to the Opposition a day for a Vote of Censure or to arrange the discussion of Supply so as to save the Government from criticism. The fact that the House has sternly resisted all suggestions to put the power of arranging Supply into the hands of an independent Committee is a proof that it takes a hopeful view of the conduct of any Leader or Party, and is confident that it is not in the power of any Minister seriously to threaten, and much less to destroy, the general spirit and traditions of the House.

(5.13.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): No one will complain of the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with this question. Though, as I happen to know, there is a considerable difference of opinion on the subject of these Rules, every one will acknowledge the impartial and courteous manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with them. Whatever may be said as to the right hon. Gentleman's possible successors and their conduct, he will allow me to say that the House of Commons might go farther and fare worse than it has done at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman himself. With regard to the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, it will be acknowledged that the right hon. Gentleman has made a full admission that Ireland is entitled to more than an exact proportion of the time given to Supply. That is obvious to anybody who considers Irish Government. It is a highly centralised government. The whole government of Ireland depends upon a central administration to a degree which does not obtain in Scotland or England. On the admission of the right hon. Gentleman, Ireland ought to have a larger proportion of time than would be given in the time allotted to Supply. I am one of those who believe that the whole time allotted to the Supply of the three countries is altogether inadequate for peforming the functions that ought to be performed. I have always advocated a system of devolution. If the whole time is inadequate, surely Ireland has some right to complain if out of the whole time you say you can give her only a fraction. It is a fraction of the whole which itself is insufficient for the work. As the hon. Member for South Tyrone has said, if you convince Ireland, or, what is more important, if you convince England that the time at your disposal for the proper examination of Irish administration is too little, you supply the strongest argument for Home Rule it is possible to use. The hon. Member for South Tyrone seems to be in the process of conversion. I do not know whether the success or failure of his Amendment will influence his mind, but, at any rate, I should vote for it, because I think the time allotted is not adequate for the purposes of Ireland. If you say you cannot give more, it is a proof that your system of government is such that it does not enable you to give Ireland the full portion of time she ought to have. It may be a strong argument to convince people of the necessity of adopting some other systems of government, but it is no answer to the contention that the time is not sufficient for the proper bringing forward of grievances. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the real function of these days in Supply is the discussion of grievances. You have, and always will have, more grievances

of Supply which prevailed, it was allowed to continue year after year without any discussion at all. The Leader of the House had said again and again that he had never in recent years heard a discussion in Supply which had the slightest effect in promoting economy, or that such a discussion was the least use in that direction. He himself held a totally different view. The difficulty which existed, before the present Rule was introduced, of pulling Supply through the House, had a great effect on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Irish Departments. Ministers when asked to increase the Estimates always answered that they had the House of Commons to face, and that they would be kept there God only knew how long. He was, he was sorry to say, a very old man in Committee of Supply, and he had not the slightest doubt that the wholesome fear of Committee in Supply, and the difficulty of getting Votes through had a very considerable effect in checking Ministers when called upon by the permanent heads of Departments to increase the Estimates. What was at the root of the extravagance of public expenditure in Ireland? Dean Swift published a little phamphlet in which he showed that a set of propositions, political, social, and economical, which were accepted all over the world, were reversed in Ireland. Ireland was the poorest country in Europe, practically speaking, and was yet the most extravagantly governed country in the world. That was a fact which ought to weigh in the House. Scotland, a country full of great urban communities which required a greater police force than poor rural districts in Ireland, had only 5,000 police, whereas Ireland in a population now reduced below that of Scotland, had 13,000 armed police, excluding the Dublin Metropolitan Police, or altogether three times the number of police Scotland had.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now going more into detail regarding methods of Government in Ireland than will be in order on this Amendment. The Amendment is that a certain number of days shall be allotted to Irish Supply, but the hon. Member is renewing the discussion of last night on the general question.

Mr. Dillon.

MR. DILLON said he did not intend to enter into details, but he dared say he had travelled too far on a subject in which he was greatly interested. The Leader of the House said that whatever might be the use of discussion in Supply in controlling the Executive action of the Government, it was of no use in promoting economy. He wished to show that Ireland was a country which required economy in administration, because it was the most extravagantly governed part of the three kingdoms, not at the expense of the Saxon taxpayers but of the wretched people in Ireland themselves who were awfully taxed, the money being squandered in the most reckless fashion by the Irish Departments. In his opinion the First Lord of the Treasury took a very narrow view of the whole question. Economy in the last resort in the internal administration of a country rested on the Government, and discussion in Supply, even when not directed to making reductions, if it were productive of, or tended to produce good administration, thereby tended to produce economy. For instance, if the Land Commission and the other Departments concerned could have been brought to end up their work, it would be possible on the day when the land question was settled to reduce the expense of the Constabulary by £1,000,000. Would not that be a great piece of economy? Therefore, he maintained that the First Lord of the Treasury looked at the question from a narrow and a shallow point of view, when he considered that discussion on Supply did not effect economy, because there might not, at the moment, be a reduction of the Vote. Everything that tended to improve administration, in efficiency, honesty, or purity, was making for economy; and, therefore, he said for all the reasons he had stated—the peculiar condition of the Government; the fact that the country was governed by a body of men out of sympathy with the population; the extravagance of that Government at the expense of the Irish and not the English taxpayer; and the peculiar difficulties of the Irish Members in the House, who were not in any way on intimate relations with the Government—Ireland was entitled to a

as Nationalists believed, prostituted, had been partial in its operation, and put to uses which the House, if it were to hear the whole truth, and acted impartially, would condemn. Surely a day for the subject would not be too much.

Then there was the great question of the Local Government Board. Four years ago an absolutely new system of local government was established in Ireland which involved quite a revolutionary change. Larger powers were given to local bodies and to the central authorities. Those were matters which ought to be discussed year after year, not simply for one day, but for several days. If they had an Irish Parliament they would not bother their heads about such matters as Fashoda and foreign policy, and the five days they were asking for could be profitably devoted to the subjects he had mentioned. There were many matters which now received no attention at all. Apart from the considerations he had urged there were many other reasons why they should have more time devoted to Irish Supply. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that the Irish Members had other opportunities of debating Irish affairs, such as moving the adjournment of the House, and that they always took advantage of other occasions. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that under the new Rules those opportunities would be further abridged, and the right of moving the adjournment would be largely curtailed, if not absolutely abolished. The fact that they had those opportunities in the past was no argument for not giving them more of such opportunities in the future.

The First Lord of the Treasury said that the Irish Members made bad use of their time by debating trivial points instead of the larger subjects, but what amount of time did they get altogether? Four days at the most and only three days last session. He protested against the statement that they wasted time, for they never misspent a moment. The subjects discussed on those three days last year were questions of first-class importance. They involved such questions as the administration of the law in Ireland and the Land Judges Court, and had they spent six days instead of three debating those questions they would not have misspent a moment of time. He thought Lord Spencer went to the root of the whole question when he pointed out that the reason why Ireland required Home Rule was because the laws for Ireland were made by other people, and no people ought to be expected to obey laws which they did not make. If they wanted obedience to those laws in Ireland they must have them made and approved of by the people themselves. How could it justly be said that they had too much time already to devote to the discussion of such vital questions? He did not believe that they ever misspent a moment discussing any Irish business.

From the point of view of intellectual interest in the debates, every hon. Member ought to support this Amendment. He had watched the operation of Supply since 1885, and he had seldom found much interest attaching to an English debate during that time, except in regard to foreign questions. Upon other English questions nobody ever said anything which was worth listening to, and they never succeeded in getting any reduction or any reform in the administration, except in recent years through the efforts of the Member for King's Lynn. He was the only English Member who threw any humour into the debate. When Scotch debates came on they were so dull that few Members would sit in the House at all, and it was only when they came to Welsh or Irish questions that they got intellectual interest and interesting debates. Therefore, from the point of view of intellectual interest, not a single Member of this House, Scotch or English, ought to vote against this Amendment. He had great pleasure in supporting it, although he did not agree that such a limit should be placed upon the time available for the discussion of Irish grievances.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) said he hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would not accept this Amendment, for the Irish Members already came off very well in regard to the time allotted to Irish Supply. Upon Irish nights few English Members put in an appearance unless there was a count,

as could be given to this business. The hon. Member for East Mayo talks as if three days are all that are given to the discussion of Irish Supply. That was the total given last year, but four days is the time that is usually given.

MR. DILLON: No, no! It was four days last year but it is generally three.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, there have been sometimes four days given but there have never been less than three. But in addition to that, as the House is perfectly well aware, there has been a good deal of time occupied, even last session when Irish passions did not run very high, outside Supply in criticism of the Irish Government. There were two days occupied by Irish Members on the Address, four Tuesday evenings, and part of the days given up to the Appropriation Bill, as well as two or three Motions for the adjournment of the House. All those were opportunities seized by Irish Members, often legitimately and sometimes illegitimately, for the discussion of Irish grievances, and that does not look as if Irish Members have been strictly confined to the four Irish nights in Supply. But I would respectfully ask Irish Members, in no controversial spirit, whether they think that the time at their disposal in Supply is used by them to the best advantage from their own point of view. When I have asked that question before, I have always been answered, "You have given us these days, please let us manage this for ourselves." They have always managed the time for themselves, and the result has been that a great many important subjects are not touched at all, while many unimportant subjects have been discussed at very great length, and even on the important subjects there has been poured a stream of rhetoric which has not always been a fertilizing stream. The hon. Gentleman pointed to a case where last year he was able to get two hours discussion on the Irish Land Court, before the Closure of the Supply, and he said that the result of that discussion was to inaugurate a great reform. I do not know whether the judges of that Court are prepared to admit that that reform was due to that debate; but I am prepared to admit that those two hours were well spent, to the credit of everybody concerned. Well, cannot more arrangements of that kind be made by hon. Members interested in Irish debates? It may be that four days in some years are not sufficient, but sometimes three days are sufficient for the discussion of Irish Supply, but whether it be three days or four days that are given, if hon. Members are really desirous of producing an effect upon this House by the statement of their grievances, they cannot go about it a worse way than by discussing them at great length, and thereby making the debates very uninteresting to Members on both sides of the House. I can assure hon. Members from Ireland that for any grievance, English, Irish, or Scotch, this House is the best audience in the world, whichever Party may be in power, if it is given a chance, and the speeches are made effective, and if the grievances are really brought home. But if the House really gets the idea that a debate is being prolonged without regard to the interest of the subject or to the convenience of the House, Members become weary and disgusted, and the effect which those who are bringing forward the complaint desire to make, is either wholly destroyed or greatly minimised. I feel that perhaps I am giving advice to hon. Gentlemen to whom I have no right to give it, and who are not bound to accept it, but I earnestly assure them that if I were in their place in this House and wished my case to be heard, I should not go about it in the way they have sometimes done. I know that they will not take the observations I make in bad part, because they are not intended to cast any aspersions on hon. Members, or to convey any criticisms on methods which, if wrong, only injure those who use them. While I do my best to allocate the time of Supply as between the different interests, it is a duty which I would willingly surrender to any competent body which the House may appoint. I think the hon. Member who last spoke is one of those who wish a Committee to be appointed for this purpose.

MR. DILLON: No, Sir. I am one of those who have strongly opposed that suggestion on more than one occasion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I regret that I should have made the mistake. Some hon. Members think it is better done by the Leader of the House, and some think it would be better done by a Committee.

MR. DILLON: From the beginning I have been in favour of leaving it in the hands of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It seems to be the general sense of the House that that duty should be left in the hands of the Leader of the House. I do not take that as being in any way a compliment to myself, but it is a great compliment to the House itself and to the position which I hold. It shows that the fears as to what will happen when other Governments come into power are really vain. I often hear suggestions of the flagitious things which are to be done by my successor in office. Well I quite admit that my successor in this House will be responsible, or at least will suggest, a great deal of iniquitous legislation, and I take the darkest view of his character from that point of view, but no man speaking from this Bench will ever dare to refuse to the Opposition a day for a Vote of Censure or to arrange the discussion of Supply so as to save the Government from criticism. The fact that the House has sternly resisted all suggestions to put the power of arranging Supply into the hands of an independent Committee is a proof that it takes a hopeful view of the conduct of any Leader or Party, and is confident that it is not in the power of any Minister seriously to threaten, and much less to destroy, the general spirit and traditions of the House.

(5.13.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): No one will complain of the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with this question. Though, as I happen to know, there is a considerable difference of opinion on the subject of these Rules, every one will acknowledge the impartial and courteous manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with them. Whatever may be said as to the right hon. Gentleman's possible successors and their conduct, he will allow me to say that the House of Commons might go farther and fare worse than it has done at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman himself. With regard to the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, it will be acknowledged that the right hon. Gentleman has made a full admission that Ireland is entitled to more than an exact proportion of the time given to Supply. That is obvious to anybody who considers Irish Government. It is a highly centralised government. The whole government of Ireland depends upon a central administration to a degree which does not obtain in Scotland or England. On the admission of the right hon. Gentleman, Ireland ought to have a larger proportion of time than would be given in the time allotted to Supply. I am one of those who believe that the whole time allotted to the Supply of the three countries is altogether inadequate for peforming the functions that ought to be performed. I have always advocated a system of devolution. If the whole time is inadequate, surely Ireland has some right to complain if out of the whole time you say you can give her only a fraction. It is a fraction of the whole which itself is insufficient for the work. As the hon. Member for South Tyrone has said, if you convince Ireland, or, what is more important, if you convince England that the time at your disposal for the proper examination of Irish administration is too little, you supply the strongest argument for Home Rule it is possible to use. The hon. Member for South Tyrone seems to be in the process of conversion. I do not know whether the success or failure of his Amendment will influence his mind, but, at any rate, I should vote for it, because I think the time allotted is not adequate for the purposes of Ireland. If you say you cannot give more, it is a proof that your system of government is such that it does not enable you to give Ireland the full portion of time she ought to have. It may be a strong argument to convince people of the necessity of adopting some other systems of government, but it is no answer to the contention that the time is not sufficient for the proper bringing forward of grievances. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the real function of these days in Supply is the discussion of grievances. You have, and always will have, more grievances

in a country where the administration is not in accordance with the general sentiments of the people, and for that reason there will always be more grievances to be brought forward from Ireland than from England or Scotland. Unless you establish some different system by which Ireland is given power to deal with her own local affairs, you are bound to give a larger share of time to the examination of the administration of those affairs than is done at present or is likely to be done. Therefore, from that point of view, I feel called upon to support the Amendment.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said there was a great deal in the arguments which had been put forward in favour of this Amendment. He had failed, however, to perceive in the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, the symptoms of conversion to the policy of Home Rule, referred to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. On the contrary, the hon. Member has expressed very emphatically views in exactly the opposite sense. What he had said was that if it was established that under the present practice Irish Estimates, and the subjects depending on those Estimates, could not be adequately discussed, it undoubtedly would furnish an argument in support of the views held so strongly by hon. Members opposite. As far as he was concerned, in regard to the allocation of days for the consideration of the Estimates presented to the House, and having heard the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman and others which had been made on the subject, he would be disposed to consider an addition to the time hitherto placed at the disposal of Irish Members.

(5.23.) MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said the Motion before the House was to give at least five days to the discussion of Irish Estimates. When the Rule was first introduced it was said that four days was Ireland's proper proportion. He, however, did not admit that any limit should be placed on the time at the disposal of Irish Members, but even supposing four days was the proper proportion, the Leader of the House had practically admitted that they were not enough, because he had plainly said that for reasons given Irish Supply deserved more attention. As to the proposal of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, the Nationalist Members would support it, but with a protest. They denied that any limit should be put upon the time given to the discussion of Irish grievances. Ireland stood in an altogether different position from England and Scotland. The Irish Members were brought to the English Parliament against their will. The Parliament of Ireland, in which these grievances could have been discussed, had been abolished; the English Government had extinguished it in blood and by bribery, and by that very fact they were bound to admit that Ireland was entitled to, and was in fact promised during the Home Rule debate—as much time for the discussion of her affairs as she would have had in her own Parliament The British Parliament was supposed to be a substitute for that of which Ireland had been deprived, and, therefore, no limit should be put on the time at the disposal of Irish Members. The Leader of the House had expressed the belief that more good was to be obtained from large debates on large questions than by the discussion on small matters. In that he agreed, and so far as Irish Members had utilised the time at their disposal by debating small matters that time had been misused. But what were the large questions affecting Irish administration that ought to be discussed? He could name five right off, each of which would require a day. Nobody could deny that the magnitude of the police question was such as to deserve a whole day. The police system in Ireland involved the military occupation of the country. If the South African war ended in the annexation of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, many a day would be spent in this House in discussing the military occupation of those territories, and yet the military occupation there would not differ essentially from that which prevailed in Ireland at the present moment. Then, too, the question of education surely deserved a day. There were questions of primary, intermediate, and University Education, each of which really require a day to itself. As to the land question, certainly a day would not be too much to devote to the Land Commission and the Land Judges Court. Another matter was the legal administration. The Attorney General had been very happy for the last three or four years, because he had practically escaped all criticism, and yet under his *aegis*, the law had been,

as Nationalists believed, prostituted, had been partial in its operation, and put to uses which the House, if it were to hear the whole truth, and acted impartially, would condemn. Surely a day for the subject would not be too much.

Then there was the great question of the Local Government Board. Four years ago an absolutely new system of local government was established in Ireland which involved quite a revolutionary change. Larger powers were given to local bodies and to the central authorities. Those were matters which ought to be discussed year after year, not simply for one day, but for several days. If they had an Irish Parliament they would not bother their heads about such matters as Fashoda and foreign policy, and the five days they were asking for could be profitably devoted to the subjects he had mentioned. There were many matters which now received no attention at all. Apart from the considerations he had urged there were many other reasons why they should have more time devoted to Irish Supply. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that the Irish Members had other opportunities of debating Irish affairs, such as moving the adjournment of the House, and that they always took advantage of other occasions. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that under the new Rules those opportunities would be further abridged, and the right of moving the adjournment would be largely curtailed, if not absolutely abolished. The fact that they had those opportunities in the past was no argument for not giving them more of such opportunities in the future.

The First Lord of the Treasury said that the Irish Members made bad use of their time by debating trivial points instead of the larger subjects, but what amount of time did they get altogether? Four days at the most and only three days last session. He protested against the statement that they wasted time, for they never misspent a moment. The subjects discussed on those three days last year were questions of first-class importance. They involved such questions as the administration of the law in Ireland and the Land Judges Court, and had they spent six days instead of three debating those questions they would not have misspent a moment of time. He thought Lord Spencer went to the root of the whole question when he pointed out that the reason why Ireland required Home Rule was because the laws for Ireland were made by other people, and no people ought to be expected to obey laws which they did not make. If they wanted obedience to those laws in Ireland they must have them made and approved of by the people themselves. How could it justly be said that they had too much time already to devote to the discussion of such vital questions? He did not believe that they ever misspent a moment discussing any Irish business.

From the point of view of intellectual interest in the debates, every hon. Member ought to support this Amendment. He had watched the operation of Supply since 1885, and he had seldom found much interest attaching to an English debate during that time, except in regard to foreign questions. Upon other English questions nobody ever said anything which was worth listening to, and they never succeeded in getting any reduction or any reform in the administration, except in recent years through the efforts of the Member for King's Lynn. He was the only English Member who threw any humour into the debate. When Scotch debates came on they were so dull that few Members would sit in the House at all, and it was only when they came to Welsh or Irish questions that they got intellectual interest and interesting debates. Therefore, from the point of view of intellectual interest, not a single Member of this House, Scotch or English, ought to vote against this Amendment. He had great pleasure in supporting it, although he did not agree that such a limit should be placed upon the time available for the discussion of Irish grievances.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) said he hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would not accept this Amendment, for the Irish Members already came off very well in regard to the time allotted to Irish Supply. Upon Irish nights few English Members put in an appearance unless there was a count,

and at 11.50 the First Lord of the Treasury came in and moved the Closure. If the total number of days allotted to Supply was to be increased, by all means let hon. Members opposite have full scope for discussion, but if the number of days was to be limited to twenty, he thought the Irish Members were making an unfair demand by this proposal. Irish Members had already far greater representation than any other part of the United Kingdom, and if they got three days out of a total of twenty, he thought they would do very well indeed. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not go out of his way to inflict any more days for Irish Supply upon his long-suffering supporters on the Ministerial side of the House. If more days were to be given to Supply he was quite willing that the Irish Members should have some portion of the extra number. His opinion was that the whole of these Rules were bad, and this Rule was one of the worst of all. He was altogether opposed to these Rules, and he meant to vote against them in the Division Lobby.

*(5.40.) MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said he wished to state why he should support the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone. He thought they were asking for very little by this Amendment. The question was whether five days was a reasonable proportion of time for the discussion of Irish grievances. He could not agree with the First Lord of the Treasury in his under-estimate of the importance of Supply. Last evening he interrupted the right hon. Gentleman with the remark: "What is the use of Supply at all?" The right hon. Gentleman was then arguing that not a penny was ever saved by the protracted discussions upon the Estimates. He had always been taught that the first thing to do in order to protect the constitution was to guard the public purse, to guard and watch Supply, and thus prevent extravagance in those entrusted with the administration of affairs. That was the first business of the House of Commons; and in his opinion it was far more important than any legislation. He had always disapproved of this Sessional Order, which was simply for the convenience of Members of Parliament, who came there to answer their own purposes, whatever their professed object might be in seeking the honour of being Members of Parliament. The whole object of this Rule was to give those hon. Members more leisure, and security that they would always be free on the 12th of August.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is now discussing the whole Rule. The only question before the House is as to the time to be given to Irish Supply.

*MR. HEMPHILL said that, while he disapproved of the limit of twenty days, it was no argument against this Amendment to say that five days was too large a proportion to ask for. It should be remembered that Ireland had peculiar claims in connection with this question of Supply, because the great majority of the Members of the House themselves admitted that they were wholly ignorant of the condition of Ireland, of the circumstances under which the Irish people lived, and under which the law was administered. It was only through the medium of argument in the House of Commons, in the debates on the Irish Estimates, or on Motions for the adjournment of the House, that the representatives of Ireland had an opportunity of explaining to their English, Scotch, and Welsh colleagues what the true state of things was in Ireland, because the Government of the day were always interested in throwing a veil over what was really going on. There were no newspapers in London which really disclosed the proceedings taking place on the other side of the Channel. The only organ that did deal very much with Ireland was *The Times*, and that great organ always viewed Irish questions with a certain amount of prejudice. That was the paper generally referred to by English, Scotch, and Welsh Members when they wanted to know what was going on in Ireland. The only check, the rod in pickle, as it were, for the various departments in Dublin Castle—and any one who knew what was going on behind the scenes in Ireland knew that he was telling the truth—was the apprehension of discussion on the Estimates. If the

Estimates of some years back were compared with those of the present day, it would be found that the First Lord of the Treasury, so far from being warranted in his statement that no economy was ever achieved by discussion on the Irish Estimates, was very much mistaken. For example, the law charges in Ireland, which a few years ago ran up to £170,000, had been gradually reduced by the operation of the criticism of the Nationalist Members, and now they amounted to between £66,000 and £70,000. That might be called cheeseparing, but it had been done by criticism. They had now entered upon a state of vandalism so far as constitutional government was concerned. They had the old, old story renewed—an extinguisher was to be put on Irish Members, so that they could not complain in the discussion of the Estimates of any of the abuses which were perpetrated by the various agents of the law in Ireland. Five days were, in his opinon, inadequate for the discussion of the Irish Estimates, but they must take what they could get, and as the House had adopted the other part of the Rule it would be perhaps unreasonable to ask for more. The Irish Parliament was taken from them, but they retained here some of the constitutional rights that existed from the earliest period of English history. One of those rights in the Irish Parliament was unlimited opportunity of stating grievances and restraining over-taxation. That ought to be one of their rights in this Parliament. Ireland was now burdened with £3,000,000 more annual taxation than it ought to pay, and therefore the Irish Members were more interested than those from England, Scotland, or Wales in keeping a tight hold on the public expenditure. The poverty of Ireland was a byword. The Government were bringing forward a tax upon meal, which was now a first necessity of life in Ireland. They were now putting a gag on Irish Members which would prevent them from criticising the administrative work of Dublin Castle and other departments.

(5.52.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the First Lord of the Treasury had offered some advice, and, by way of enforcing it, declared that there was no audience in the world more ready to listen to a case fairly stated than the House of Commons. He accepted that statement. He thought ths was a very tolerant, patient, and kindly Assembly, but in order to have good temper in the audience it was necessary first to have the audience. It was a slight condition precedent of which the First Lord did not quite take adequate notice. The First Lord held a great official position in the House and was a man of distinguished Parliamentary ability. The result was that the mere fact of the First Lord rising in his place was sufficient to bring a larger audience to the House to hear his speech, whether the reasoning of the speech was good or bad, or whether the cause was good or bad. But, as a matter of fact, Irish debates took place in the presence of empty Benches, unless they happened to have something of the personal character and the Donnybrook air which gave them a festive interest for English Members. When the First Lord concluded his counsels of perfection to the Irish Members, one of their number got up to speak, but the audience that assembled to listen to the right hon. Gentleman found something better to do in other parts of the House. He did not blame the House for it. It was in the nature of the case. It was one of the misfortunes of the whole situation. It was perfectly impossible to expect an audience of Englishmen to be as much interested in the parochial affairs of Ireland as the Irish were in those matters. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent was perfectly justified in the somewhat lucid description he gave of Irish debates. What happened was reducing Irish discussion to a farce and a nullity. The same observations applied a great deal more to Scotch debates. Irish debates did sometimes attract an audience, but Scotch debates had the irresistible power—as if there was a cry of leprosy in the land- of expelling every Member from the House except the Scotch Members. But there was this difference, that Scotch questions, as a rule, were decided by the majority of Scotch Members.

He thought these debates on Procedure would serve a useful purpose, not altogether contemplated when the new

Rules were introduced. The First Lord tonight confessed that he had a good deal of sympathy with the Irish case. If sympathy could save Ireland, she would be one of the happiest and most prosperous countries in the world; but sympathy without relief, as the old proverb said, was very much like mustard without beef. The First Lord had admitted that Ireland had a claim on the attention of the House which did not exist in the case of England, Scotland, or Wales. Ireland had a centralised government, and a system of administration by officials who were not only irresponsible to Irish opinion, but hostile to it, and therefore the one tribunal before which they could bring that body was this House. The action of an English policeman or magistrate was not brought before the House except in rare instances. That was done in the Cass case some years ago, and the House rightly regarded what occurred as an invasion of personal liberty. If Cass cases were as common in England as cases of police violence in Ireland, there would not be a week when the adjournment of the House would not be moved in order to bring forward complaints of interference with personal liberty. The Government of Ireland, from the necessities of the case, was one of the most paternal in the world. What he meant by that was that it attempted to do more than that of any other country in the world. Every cottage and home in Ireland was practically brought under the survey and influence of the law, and therefore the Irish Members ought to have opportunities for adequate discussion in this House. Many hon. Members opposite represented great English towns. They were perfectly safe with their police. They had a Watch Committee in every municipality to protect the liberties of the people against police violence, and the police were the subjects and creatures of the municipalities. In Ireland the police were as independent of public opinion as if they were dealing with anarchists and Nihilists in the streets of St. Petersburg, instead of being in what was supposed to be a free country. The first place he visited when he came to London was Covent Garden Market. He was then able to stop up until five o'clock in the morning in order to see the sights of London without any injury to his health. Everyone who had seen that most extraordinary sight knew that there was centred the most extraordinary congestion of traffic in London. The huge vegetable carts piled with vegetables required police direction to make business possible. He found, to his surprise, a policeman actually condescending to argue with the drivers. The policeman said to one, "You cannot go there," and to another, "Don't you see you cannot do that?" The argument in Ireland would be a blow from a bâton by a policeman without a number, and, therefore, incapable of being identified; and, even if identified, he would be protected by all the powers of Dublin Castle. Therefore the question of the police was one which the Irish Members should bring before the House of Commons as the only tribunal which could deal with it. Then, again, the new Technical Department, a most important and a most useful Department, which all sections of the House combined in passing, had been in existence for three years, but had never been discussed in this House.

So it went on from year to year. The Police Service in Ireland, the Land Commission, the Landed Estates Court, departments all going down to every hearth and home in Ireland, remained undiscussed. What was the reason? The right hon. Gentleman said they had no time. He admitted the grievance, but declared he was helpless. The right hon. Gentleman said that there were only twenty-three days altogether, and that he thought three days was a scant allowance to Ireland, that four days would be a more reasonable allowance, and he did not even exclude the five days proposed by the Amendment, but yet that he had no remedy. He was rather disappointed at the whole attitude of the right hon. Gentleman towards the Rules. [Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I am not.] His hon. friend said he was not. He was of a more sanguine and just temperament than his hon. friend, who, though a most genial man, had a certain fund of scepticism and cynicism in his political character, which he did not sympathise with. He thought when the right hon. Gentleman

undertook the question of remodelling the ancient machinery of the House of Commons, he would have displayed a more strenuous spirit. The right hon. Gentleman made speech after speech, and calculation after calculation; but what did they all come to?—that the machinery of the House was bad, had been bad, would never be anything but bad, for the discharge of business. The right hon. Gentleman had no eulogy for the past, and no hope for the future of the House of Commons. That was not the proper spirit in which to approach the question. When all was said and done, the House of Commons was the great inspiring force from which ought to radiate the whole Government of a great and expanding Empire; and when an opportunity occurred, as it had occurred in connection with the Rules, of restoring to that Assembly the dignity and power which by admission it had lost, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have approached it, not in a spirit of pathetic despair, but of strenuous energy and hope, so that its machinery might be made equal to the demands upon it. He did not intend to be disrespectful to the right hon. Gentleman—he hoped he never was—but the tone of pessimism displayed by the right hon. Gentleman almost reminded him of that sub-acid flavour they occasionally found in the conversation of a jaded professional beauty just on the wane. Somehow or other, she did not find the world as bright, as gay, and as hopeful as it used to be. Men were not what they used to be in the olden time, and their admiration was not so ready. That was not the spirit in which one of the foremost figures of the Empire should approach such a great question as that of fashioning the machinery of this House to meet the wants and needs of a great Empire.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I make an appeal to the House to come to a decision on this Amendment, which has been discussed at considerable length.

(6.8.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 135; Noes, 218. (Division List No. 133.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc. Stroud
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caine, William Sproston
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh're
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Cann, James,
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mather, William
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)

Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thompson, Dr EC(Monagh'n, N
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.
White, Luke (York, E. R.
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Dillon.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus H'nry Eden
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain. Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold. Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbys'ire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Law ence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald. Sir Robert Penrose-
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hon. J. E (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. G R C Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nder'y
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Alexander
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H.
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis, (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmou h
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J H (Dumfriesshire
Maysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parker, Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H, (Hertford, East)
Smith, H C (North'mb, Tynesi e

Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(Birm
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

(6.24.) MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said the object of the Amendment which he now proposed to move was essentially a practical one. The most salient fact of the Supply Rule during the few years that it had been in operation was that, although the Government had given a large amount of time—he was almost tempted to think too much—for the discussion of Supply, the whole time was really given to Second Reading discussions of five or six different questions. The whole character of discussion in Supply, of dealing with the details one by one, and with as large a number of questions as could reasonably be brought under discussion, had been put on one side. The Amendment made two suggestions which he hoped the House would consider practical. The first was that all Motions put down by hon. Members in Committee of Supply should be arranged and classified by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means; that they should draw up from time to time a scheme under which these Motions could be brought before the House in consecutive order. He did not suggest that the exact proportion of time to be given to each discussion should be fixed, as he did not think that would be convenient; but he thought that they would be going a step further in the direction which the right hon. Gentleman intended to go when he first introduced this Rule by passing this Amendment. He did not see any supreme difficulty in Motions being classified from time to time with the advice and suggestion of the Government Whips in consultation with the other Whips of the House; and he had introduced into the Amendment the words "unless the House otherwise directs," because a cast-iron rule of this kind would defeat the object he had in view. To facilitate that object he had inserted in the last line of the Amendment conditions with regard to those who brought Motions before the Committee that were not in existence now. That was to say that instead of giving simply the heading of the Vote as was now done, hon. Members should suggest the object of their Motion. He had never troubled the House much in Supply, but he had noticed that whenever he had put down a Motion for a reduction it was the practice of the head of the Department which the reduction concerned to come and ask what was the object of the reduction. That information was always given, and he thought it would facilitate discussion in Committee of Supply if hon. Members put down on the Paper the intention with which they moved a reduction. A Motion should be specific in its character. He had no desire, in urging the acceptance of this Amendment, to repeat the arguments which had been stated again and again as to the general nature of these Rules and the object of passing them, but he did insist most strongly on this aspect of the working of the Rules. The real idea of this Amendment was that instead, of proceeding at once, as it was conceivable we might be forced to proceed in times to come, to the time limit that had been introduced into the American Assembly. it would be better to have a series of Motions placed upon the Paper authoritatively for a particular day. He thought that if these Motions were specific, and if they were placed, with the authority of the Chair and the House generally, in a specific order on the Paper, the right hon. Gentleman would be placed in a strong position to apply to the House to conclude a discussion on one subject and pass to the

next. There would be a sense of fair play when once the practice was established that a certain time would be given to every question put down on the Paper for a particular day. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 8, after the word 'Account,' to insert the words 'and, in the consideration of the Estimates, Notices of Motion as to any Vote, or any Item in any Vote, unless the House otherwise direct, shall be placed in order according to a classification to be made by Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means from time to time, and all such Notices of Motion shall specify the object for which such Motion will be made.'"—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the hon. Gentleman proposes to throw upon the Speaker the task of settling the order in which, not the Votes, but the Motions on the Votes, are to be discussed.

MR. CHANNING: That a scheme should be drawn up for classifying them according to their relative importance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have a certain amount of sympathy with the aim of the hon. Gentleman, because it is undoubtedly the fact that sometimes really important issues which the House would like to see dealt with are deferred by some perfectly trivial discussion on an earlier item. But I do not think the plan proposed by the hon. Gentleman would be satisfactory, for two reasons. In the first place, it limits too severely the initiative of the House. As I understand the proposal, nobody would be able to start a discussion unless he had on the Paper a notice of Motion. That would doubtless be an immense convenience to Ministers, and I may incidentally observe that the debates in Supply would be greatly improved if Members would tell the Minister concerned beforehand the points they desired to deal with. The Minister would then be able to get up his case, and it would be for the general convenience of the House. But to say that no discussion should be started without notice is to fetter the House in a manner which I do not think they would tolerate. My second objection is as strong as my first, though perhaps not so easy to state to the House. I think the proposal would throw upon Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees a responsibility which they should not to be asked to undertake. Take the Foreign Office Vote, for instance, and suppose the Speaker or the Chairman had to decide whether we should discuss China or Uganda, I do not think it would be possible to ask those who preside over our deliberations to take upon themselves so invidious or difficult a task. Therefore, though I should like to see some elasticity given to the House in regard to the order in which items should be discussed, I do not think the plan proposed is one to which we could assent.

(6.40.) MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that all would recognise the conciliatory character of the remarks of the Leader of the House, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would draw up a form of words embodying some such proposition as that before the House. There had been a universal consensus of opinion that in some way or another the Motions upon Estimates should be arranged and classified, and surely it was not beyond the ingenuity of the Government to devise a scheme for that purpose. There was, no doubt, considerable force in the objection to placing an undue and almost improper responsibility upon the Speaker in this matter; but, probably, by means of a Committee or by agreement between the two Front Benches, or the two sides of the House, an arrangement could be come to by which the Motions should be regulated. In the proposal on the Paper he could not trace any words which necessitated a Motion relating to the Estimates being put on the Notice Paper. It might be necessary, but it was not definitely stated.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) pointed out that the Amendment related to the allocation not of Votes, but of Amendments and notices of Motions in the nature of Amendments to the Votes. Such a proposal, he thought, would not work. It was absolutely impossible to deprive Members of the power of moving in Supply Amendments which were not on the Paper, because, from the very nature

of the case, circumstances might arise during a discussion which rendered an Amendment necessary. That being so, it would be impossible to carry out this proposal, because Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means, to whom it was proposed to refer these matters, would not have before him for classification Motions which might be of a most important character. No doubt some system for the allocation of Votes was very desirable. If a scheme could be devised by which Votes would be put in such an order as to ensure each Vote coming on in its turn and none being habitually excluded, as was now the case, the Amendments would come naturally in their place. He agreed that it would not be right to place this duty upon either Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means. Both were officers of the House, with a great deal of work to do, and the amount of detailed examination which would be required in the discharge of this duty ought not to be put upon them. If upon anybody, it should be upon a Committee; and if upon a Committee, it should be upon the Public Accounts Committee. Even then, he had serious doubts as to whether it would work. The Votes might be arrang d by taking them from the beginning one year, and from the end the next; or to take the first Vote first in one year, the second Vote first in the next year, and so on. At any rate, he should think some plan could be devised by which the Votes, each in its turn, should necessarily come under review in a favourable position before Committee of Supply. It was, no doubt, a serious defect in our present system, but he did not think the hon. Member's proposal would work satisfactorily, and he should, therefore, vote against it.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that, while it was clear the particular Amendment before the House would not meet the object they had in view, it was evident that there was a general feeling in favour of something being done in the direction of classifying the different items under particular heads, so that the House should have under its control more than at present the subject it desired todiscuss. Possibly, however, the latter part of the Amendment might be adopted without leading to any of the difficulties the First Lord had referred to. It would then be necessary, when notices of Amendments were given, to state the specific object with which the reductions were to be moved. At present, Motions were often put down to reduce the salary of a certain official by £100, but nobody, except the Member concerned, knew the object of the Amendment. The Chairman of Ways and Means had at present very elastic powers in regard to calling on Members; he was not compelled to call on the Members whose names stood first on the Paper, and he frequently exercised that discretion, to the great advantage of the Committee, when he knew that a certain Member desired to raise a question in which the Committee were particularly interested. The Chairman would be able to exercise that power much more freely if the notices of reduction stated in a few words their specific object, and it would also be for the general convenience of the House. He, therefore, hoped the right hon. Gentleman would favourably consider the latter part of the Amendment.

MR. CHAPLIN agreed with the objections which had been taken to the first part of the Amendment. He was wholly opposed to the responsibility of deciding on the relative importance of different Amendments being thrown upon the Speaker or any official of the House. The second part of the Amendment, however, stood on a totally different footing. The course there proposed would be to the advantage of the House and enormously to the convenience of Ministers. Speaking from his own experience at the Local Government Board, he knew that Ministers frequently had to exercise great activity in order to ascertain the points that were going to be raised in the discussion of the Votes of which they were in charge. He hoped, therefore, his right hon. friend would undertake to consider some proposal for giving effect to the sense of the second part of the Amendment.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said it was not always easy to indicate in a few words the matter a Member desired to bring forward. He might desire to allude to the incapacity of a Minister, and it would be very difficult for him specifically to mention that on the Paper. It was, however, very desirable that a Minister should have some intimation beforehand of the subjects to be raised. It would also be for the advantage of the Committee if when one reduction had been moved, no other subject should be permitted to be brought forward until that particular reduction had been disposed of. Frequently when a reduction had been moved to call attention to a particular matter, say China, another Member would rise in his place and discuss the Uganda Railway, although a reduction had actually been moved in connection with China. He thought it would help matters very much in the debate if they could speak on the subject upon which a reduction had been moved.

(6.55.) MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said it seemed to him that if anything of that kind were done, it would largely fetter the freedom of discussion. As matters stood at present, if any Member moved a reduction, and spoke upon the question of the Uganda Railway, for instance, there was nothing to prevent another hon. Member discussing some other subject.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought there was a great deal in the remarks which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet. They must guard against the risk of having the whole twenty days of Supply given up to the discussion of special subjects. That might be interesting, but it would not be an effective discussion of the Estimates. The First Lord had stated that he had succeeded in getting important matters discussed in Supply. His opinion was that they got those subjects too much discussed, for there was nothing so important as the details of these tremendous Votes. They should go through the Estimates from the first to the last, not necessarily every year, but at some time, and look at them in a business-like spirit, from the point of view of this great and growing expenditure. It was the every-day dull business which they ought to endeavour to get a few business men to do in Supply, for the nation required it to be done.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) agreed that if this Amendment were carried, it would be a convenience to Ministers. They were not, however, sent to the House to consider the convenience of Ministers, but the convenience of hon. Members at large, and he ventured to say that the carrying of this Amendment would not be for the convenience of hon. Members at large. He agreed that this Amendment threw a most invidious duty upon the Chair, and he felt sure the House would agree with him when he said that the less the Chair was brought into conflict with hon. Members the better.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) appealed to his hon. friend to withdraw his Amendment, and suggested that the First Lord of the Treasury might deal with the matter at some later stage.

MR. CHANNING said he was quite willing to withdraw his Amendment, and expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would initiate some constructive policy with regard to this question of discussion in Supply.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(7.5.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he would now move the Amendment standing in his name, which provided that the Vote or Votes to be considered on each Friday should be determined by the Committee on Public Accounts. At present the allocation was performed theoretically by the Leader of the House on his own Motion and authority, but no doubt in so allocating the days he had certain principles in view, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the House what they were. His practice seemed to be that he placed the Votes which gave the Government the most money first, and when the Government had got as much money as was necessary for them to carry on their business the right hon. Gentleman then began to consider the Votes in the order of their public importance. If there happened to be great interest taken in a question of foreign policy, the right

hon. Gentleman would put down the Foreign Office Vote, or if it was a Colonial question he would put down the Colonial Office Vote. The point he wished to raise was whether it would be possible to relieve the right hon. Gentleman of the duty of deciding these rival claims by referring the question to some other body. He thought that if there was to be any Committee or any other body whatever other than the House itself, it should be the Public Accounts Committee. He was conscious that he was making a suggestion which, if carried out, would in some measure tend to relieve the Leader of the House of responsibility for some of the business of the House, but it would only apyly to the days allocated to Supply.

If there was a body to which might be committed the power of allocating the Votes in Supply from week to week —and he thought it would be absolutely impossible to allocate them all at the beginning of the session—he thought the Public Accounts Committee, with its special knowledge of and special competency in relation to the Estimates, was the body to whom the responsibility should be entrusted. This Committee had always been recognised as the body to deal with the Estimates, and no essential change in the form of Estimates could properly be made without previous consultation with the Committee on Public Accounts. He had several extracts from Treasury Minutes to support that contention, but he did not think it would be denied. If this Amendment received favour in the eyes of the House the Committee on Public Accounts would every week receive those appeals which were now made to the Leader of the House, and would consider them. Of course, the Public Accounts Committee would readily recognise that the Government must at an early period have some of the larger Votes to go on with. The Committee would consider the various claims for interesting and important subjects in connection with the policy of the country.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Would they take evidence?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the Committee would take no more evidence than the Leader of the House at present did. They would allocate the Votes for the succeeding week, and on the Friday they would give notice to the House as to what Votes had been allocated for the following Thursday. He was not quite certain that this was a practical suggestion, and he should be glad if the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, who was sitting opposite, would favour the House with his views upon this question.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 8, after the word 'shall,' to insert the words "be allocated each week to such Votes as may be determined by the Committee on Public Accounts, and notice shall be given of the allocation so determined at the Friday sitting of each week, and the allotted days shall.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(7.12.) SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The hon. Gentleman has expressed great doubts as to the proposal he has made. I confess that I think it would not be practicable, and that the only principle we can act upon is to leave the whole responsibility of these matters on the Leader of the House. Whether or not any particular subject is one which the House ought to have an opportunity of discussing, is a question upon which he has much better means of ascertaining the views of hon. Members than any Committee whatever. I do not know how a Committee would get at the sentiments of the House. They might be very much divided, and that would be a very great danger. We ought to have one man responsible for this, and if you trust the Leader of the House I think it is far better.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I need say anything on this matter. My hon. friend has avowedly put this forward rather as a subject for the House to consider than a plan to which he is attached. He was not, I think, present in the House when his Amendment was discussed in connection with the previous Amendment, upon which we have already had a big discussion. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, and the hon. Member for East Mayo, although they did not agree in everything, were agreed in this,

that we should devolve on no Committee of the House the duties of the Leader of the House. As far as I am concerned, I should be very glad to see that work devolved on a Committee, but I do not think that is the general view of the House, and under these circumstances I trust that we will not embark on what would be a very academic discussion which would not lead to any practical result.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER (Walsall) said the Minister of the Department must be the person to settle and allocate the order in which the different items in his Vote should be taken. If there was any special question which did not come under any particular item, the Secretary of State could arrange to have it taken up on the Vote for his own salary if there was a feeling in the House that the matter should be discussed. All these matters should be left entirely to the Minister of the Department who had charge of the Vote, who would indicate to the Leader of the House the day he wanted for the discussion. As Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, he said the Committee would be unable to accept the duty the Amendment proposed to cast upon it.

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich) said that it would be an unwise thing to take away responsibility from the Leader of the House with regard to the allocation of Votes. He objected to the suggestion that the work should be devolved on the Public Accounts Committee, on the ground that that Committee had already quite as much to do as they could possibly find time for. If they were to undertake to allocation of the Votes in the way proposed, they would be obliged to give to that work a certain amount of time which ought to be devoted to their more legimate duties. He appreciated the desire to see a better allocation of the time in regard to the Estimates, but he thought if there was to be any real economy in the administration of the affairs of the country it would not be by discussing large and important items, but by dealing with certain small items which had grown up in the Estimates by degrees, and which in his opinion would only be got rid of by degrees.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

(7.22.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES moved that the words "for war expenditure" be left out of the third paragraph of the Standing Order. He explained that the object of this Amendment was to provide that the time devoted to the discussion of all supplementary estimates, whether for war expenditure or any other purpose, should not be counted in the twenty or twenty-three days allotted for business in Supply. He asked the House to consider what would be the effect of passing the proposed Rule as it stood. They had already allotted twenty days for business in Supply, but there were certain items which, under the Rule, were to be outside of the twenty days' limit; and if the Government desired a vote in respect of any one of these items, it was to be taken out of Government time, and not out of private Members' time. Consequently the one object of the Government would be to keep everything within the twenty days if possible. But if the Government presented any supplementary estimate it ought to be outside of the allotted days. The words "for war expenditure" which he proposed to leave out, were not, he believed, in the Rule when originally proposed as a Sessional Order, but somehow they were introduced at a later period.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When I moved the Rule last year it seemed to me that it was not right that so big a subject as the supplementary War Estimates should be included in the twenty days, as they might raise questions of policy, and ought therefore to be excluded from that computation.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he wanted to go further, and to provide not only that no supplementary estimates for war expenditure, but that no supplementary Estimates at all ought to be included in the twenty days. A supplementary Estimate was a thing which, by the rules and traditions of the House, ought very rarely to be presented; but in recent years there had been a great number of supplementary Estimates. He was not

prepared to say that supplementary Estimates were always wrong. There were occasions when unexpected expenditure had to be provided for. Whose time was to suffer when such Estimates were brought forward? Surely not the time of private Members, which was already far too small. Nor should the time be taken out of what he regarded as the already insufficient twenty days. If the Estimate was supplementary so should the day be supplementary. This was a reasonable Amendment, and would only restore the Rule to what it was before last year. He moved.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 15, to leave out the words 'for War Expenditure.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. LOUGH said he attached the greatest importance to this Amendment, and he trusted that the House would carefully consider what the mover had said. He thought hon. Members, if free to express their views, would be of opinion that the clause which they had passed was a very severe one. Now they were dealing with a proviso which excluded some things from the sweep of the resolution just passed. A tremendous encroachment might be made on the days allotted to Supply if supplementary Estimates were included in the operation of the Rule. War expenditure was not a bit more interesting and important and might not require a bit more consideration from the House than other new matters which suddenly came before them. Suppose they were asked to give a grant for famine in India, that would surely be a matter requiring some time for discussion, and that day should not be taken out of the twenty days. This year they were already warned of a supplementary Est mate for the West Indies. He did not think it would be fair to take a day for that out of the twenty days. During the past few years supplementary Estimates had become a perfect scandal. In the last ten years there had been a steady and continuous growth of the most alarming character, with the result that a great stimulus had been given to extravagance. They did not know the circumstances which the future might bring forth, and that, being so, they ought carefully to guard the twenty days which had been allotted for business in Supply.

(7.30.) MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose to traverse the whole of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, otherwise I might be tempted to comment on one phrase he let fall—that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was incapable of speaking in firm language to his colleagues or to anyone else. My right hon. friend has been subjected to many criticisms, like every public man, but I think no criticism has ever been passed on him which is so wide of the mark as that. The two hon. Gentlemen who have spoken on this Amendment to the same effect have not shown much gratitude, I do not think they have shown any gratitude, for the change made last year. I think that change did exclude from the limit of the twenty days that kind of supplementary Estimate which ought not to be brought within that limit, but it is evident that there are a great many supplementary Estimates which it would be very absurd to take outside that limit. Suppose a Committee on the ventilation of this House were to report that some structural alteration was immediately required, and that a supplementary Estimate was introduced for that purpose, I think it would be very improper that a Government Bill, by hypothesis devoted to some very important subject, should be trenched upon to an unlimited extent by the discussion of a supplementary Estimate of that character. Or take a Bill appointing factory inspectors, which required some immediate expenditure, and that a supplementary Estimate is introduced, as not infrequently happens, I think it is quite right that such an Estimate should fall within the ordinary limit of our Supply Rule. But I am quite ready to admit that there may be questions of a wholly new service being started—some subject not included in the ordinary Estimates of the year, something which has arisen since the ordinary Estimates were framed, and, not only that, but something which cannot be

fitted in to the ordinary Estimates, something which is not a supplementary Estimate in the ordinary use of that word, which is not merely an increase in a Vote which the House has already sanctioned, and which, judging by past experience, it would be prepared to sanction, if, in such a case, it will be taken as a serious concession by the House, and if it will shorten the debate, I shall be prepared, not indeed to accept my hon. friend's words, but to accept words which go a good way in his direction. If the House will be prepared to take it as a useful concession, I will be prepared to move such an Amendment. I shall be prepared to move at the end of line 13 the following words—

"Any new service not included in the ordinary Estimates of the year."

That does not go the whole way asked for by the hon. Gentleman opposite, but it does, I think, meet the most important part of the objection which has been raised, and if the House will accept it as a compromise I shall be very glad to move it.

MR. DILLON said that undoubtedly the concession of the right hon. Gentleman was a very important one. There was another concession made in the Rule by the right hon. Gentleman to which he would invite the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn. In line 59 it is proposed that—

"Any additional Estimate for any new service or matter not included in the original Estimates for the year shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed."

That bore on the present concession of the right hon. Gentleman. Last year it so happened that an entirely new service was started towards the end of the session, which had no reference to any service of the year, and which was closured without any discussion. A loan of £75,000 was sanctioned which was absolutely apart from any service of the year. Hon. Members would observe that it was now provided that any new service should be submitted to the consideration of the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee was closed. He raised the point last session, but was not successful, as it was ruled that inasmuch as the notice was on the paper a fortnight before, and during days when Supply was discussed, although it was not reached, it should be taken as having been submitted to the consideration of the Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member is a little premature in raising that point. It is entirely a different point from that now before the House.

MR. DILLON said that if the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment were carried the provision to which he was referring would be rendered unnecessary, because when any new service or supplementary Estimate not dealt with or provided for in the Estimates of the year was proposed it must be taken not within twenty days but in time provided by the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Any new service not included in the ordinary Estimates of the year, such as the loan referred to by the hon. Member, would be a new service, and if the Rule is passed in the shape in which it appears on the Paper, and with this Amendment—

"Not later than two days before the Committee is closed."

it would not come within the purview of the twenty-three days at all.

MR. DILLON said that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman would do away with the difficulty which arose last year, and, that being so, he thought the concession a very substantial one.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked whether it was proposed to make any distinction between "service" and "matter."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think "matter" will be excluded, but it will be absolutely clear and beyond any doubt or question.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked if there would be any distinction between Amendments to Ordinary Estimates and Amendments to what were called Original Estimates. If the right hon. Gentleman would look at the sentence beginning at line fifty-seven he would see that "original" was the word used.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will tell the House exactly why we have put in "ordinary" instead of "original." I understand from my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury that every year a Civil Contingencies Fund has to be introduced as a Supplementary Estimate. That is an inevitable part of the financial system of the country, and I believe it would be interpreted as an original Estimate of the year. It is quite clear, however, that that ought to be included within the twenty-three days. It is to make that quite clear that we have put in "ordinary" instead of "original," but if it is distinctly laid down that such an estimate as that is not excluded from the twenty-three days, I will have no objection to "original," though I think the other word is better.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he thought that there should be some amendment in the language used in the last part of the Rule as to "service" and "matter."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think we may do that.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought that "matter" was of some importance. There might be no new service, but there might be such a thing as the purchase of a large piece of land. That would not be a new service, but it would be new matter. The words were originally "service or matter" and he could not see what objection there was to their being retained.

MR. DILLON said they were all agreed as to the substance of the concession, but the ruling last year did not carry out the original intention. They were called upon last year to vote £6,500,000 as a grant in aid for the new Colonies. It might have been held that that was not a new service, because it was a Colonial Office grant, but it was new matter no one could doubt. He was quite sure that the intention of the right hon. Gentleman was that his concession should cover such a case as that.

(7.45.) MR. BRYCE said it seemed to him that "service" and "matter" were not necessarily the same thing, and that the word "matter" might be ruled to cover simply the object, not necessarily the means by which it was to be obtained. The word "matter" implied more than "service," and might be necessary in order to cover a new form of obtaining the object of the vote. He would suggest, therefore, that it would be safer to include the word "matter," and the real object of the right hon. Gentleman would be better attained by including it. He hoped that what had been said about supplementary Estimates would not be forgotten, and if the debate exercised any influence on the Departments in the direction of dispensing with supplementary Estimates it would have done good. When he entered the House of Commons twenty-two years ago supplementary Estimates were rare. It was considered rather a blot on a Department to have a supplementary Estimate, and the Minister in charge apologized to his colleagues for it. They were now so common, however, that that uneasy feeling had disappeared.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said they were all quite agreed as to the compromise, but it was extremely difficult to know how to express it. There might be some substance in the contention of his hon. friend. Cases might be imagined in which "service" did not include "matter," but certainly "matter" might be interpreted to include things which might be in the nature of ordinary Supplementary Estimates, things which could not be said to lie outside the Rule. He thought the case would be met by the insertion of the words "or for any new service not included in the Estimates of the year."

MR. DILLON said there was another point on which he would like to have the opinion of the Secretary to the Treasury. Take a grant in aid to Jamaica, for a steam-ship service—that was a Colonia Office grant. He knew that the First Lord would never dream of excluding that, but it was totally new matter, and, it might be ruled by the Chair to be not a new service but a Supplementary Grant in aid.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said the case which had been instanced by the hon. Gentleman was clearly one which would be excluded from the twenty-three days. He reminded the hon. Gentleman that so right was it thought that a distinction of this kind should be made that in the previous year, although this Rule was then in force, it was brought in as a separate Vote.

MR. DILLON agreed that that was so, but pointed out that there was no ruling from the Chair. That was a voluntary act.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Member might be satisfied that if a ruling could have been obtained it would have been, but such a thing never occurred to their minds. It was thought proper to treat that Vote in a particular way, and it was so treated. He certainly thought that that class of case ought not to be included.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it might make the discussion a little easier and facilitate the matter if he withdrew his Amendment in order to allow the right hon. entleman to move his. He therefore begged to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 15, after the word 'Expenditure,' to insert the words 'or for any new service not included in the ordinary Estimates for the year.'" —(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*).

Question proposed, "That the words be there inserted."

MR. BRYCE said that subsidies were given to Jamaica for steam-ship service and for the provision of sugar factories, which were covered by the ordinary Estimates, but supposing a further amount was given for the purpose of roviding a bounty on sugar it might be said that that was a new service when it was only a new matter on which items were introduced referable to the same service. But at the same time it was desirable that whenever there was anything in the nature of new policy or new application of matter, to which argument should be addressed, it should be excluded.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the case put by the right hon. Gentleman would be a new service. If the word "matter" as well as the words "new services" were introduced it would be almost impossible to deal with any addition to an existing Vote even of the most cogent kind. The Factory Act recently introduced, for instance, would necessitate some fresh expenditure on the part of the Home Office, but no one would contend that an Estimate of that kind, which raised no question of principle, should be excluded from the twenty-three days, and ought to form the subject of a separate debate outside the Rule. Again, the coal duties imposed last year necessitated a larger amount being granted to the Customs for the purpose of providing extra staff to deal with them, but that was not a case to exclude from the ordinary discussion on the Vote. He hoped the House would accept the suggestion of his right hon. friend, and be content to take the words in the form in which they were.

Question put and agreed to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said although he attached considerable importance to the word "matter," he was prepared to relinquish it, because this debate would carry conviction to any Chairman of Committees who chose to read it as to the real meaning of the word that was intended to be used. What they wanted to ensure was that if any new policy or new idea occurred to the Government requiring a new item, that should be outside the allotted days. The Amendment he now moved was really a consequential Amendment to his previous one. A matter of this kind should not be left to a Minister of the Crown alone but to the House as a whole. This was to be a Standing Order for ever; it would stand when this Government had gone and another Government occupied its place. It might be that a Minister would come into power who would refuse to give the three days when they were necessary; then he thought it should be in the power of an ordinary Member to propose the three days. He would be quite content if his right hon. friend would accept the Amendment to

leave out the words "by a Minister of the Crown," without inserting anything in their place. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 17, to leave out the words 'by a Minister of the Crown.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no objection to my hon. friend's Amendment. I do not think it will ever be done except by a Minister of the Crown.

Question put and negatived.

MR. LOUGH congratulated himself in finding the right hon. Gentleman in so yielding a mood. The House was dealing with the second proviso of what they considered was a bad Rule, and they were endeavouring to improve the Rule. He desired by his Amendment to leave out the words "not exceeding three days." There was something of the forcibly feeble in the wording of this Rule as it stood. It looked as if the Government were afraid of themselves. The First Lord had not got all he desired under this Rule, and he was dealing with a proviso for getting a few more days. Then why put a restriction on himself or the House in this matter? It was almost insulting to the Ministers and to the House to leave it as it was. The last six years that had passed would show that it was almost impossible to fix any rule as to what time should be devoted to the discussion of Supply. Last year £212,000,000 had to be provided; seven years since, only £106,000,000. He could not see the slightest reason why the First Lord should put into the Standing Orders of the House a restriction to which he would be unable to adhere, and he therefore begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 18, to leave out the words 'not exceeding three days.'"—(*Mr Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'not exceeding' stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member must perceive that this Amendment, if carried, would destroy the whole principle of the Rule, and practically give an unlimited amount of time to the discussion of Supply. It would not be possible for us to assent to so wide a change in our proposals, and I hope, after the lengthened discussion we have had on this question, the hon. Gentleman will not think it necessary to go to a division.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE pointed out that last year thirty-six days were given to Supply, seven of which were allotted to supplementary Estimates. That was not much above the average of recent years, and it was four days above the average up to 1896, since when, however, the expenditure had enormously increased. Under this Rule, no more time would be given in a year of abnormal expenditure than in a year when the expenditure was less by many millions. Elasticity was absolutely necessary in this matter, and a strong case had been made out against restricting the discussions in Supply to a limit which had never in practice obtained.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) thought that if the right hon. Gentleman would give an indication of his intention to accept an Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Cork (to insert "Five" in place of "Three") it would shorten the discussion. The business of Supply was becoming more and more serious each year, and instead of the period devoted to it being shortened, it ought, at least, to be as long as heretofore. There was not at all sufficient time to discuss Irish Estimates, and the right hon. Gentleman should remember that whenever he thought a debate had reached its proper limit he had the closure at his disposal.

(8.13.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 138 Noes, 95. (Division List No. 134.) (8.25.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Hry. Eden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Jocceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Bartley, George C. T.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bousfield, William Robert
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Bull, William James
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C W (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.)
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J F (Sheffield. Brightside)
Howard, J. (Midd. Tottenham)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kimber, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S.)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
M'Calmont, Col H. L. B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell W J H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jh. Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ridley, Hon M. W. (Stalybridge
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rutherford, John
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon Arthur (Orm'kirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thornburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Whiteley, H (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Charles P (Glouc., Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Jones William (Carn'rvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Leamy, Edmund
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
Macdonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary M d
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon N.)
O'Malley, William

O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, Geo. (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

(8.55.) MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.) moved an Amendment to provide that five, instead of three, days additional might be allotted, if necessary, for Supply. He considered it a mistake to lay down any limit for the number of days to be given to Supply, because the time required must alter according to the exigencies of the public business brought before the House. Looking at the course of the debate he was rather surprised at his own moderation. He was sorry that he did not propose that six or seven additional days might be allotted in order to give the Government a chance of allowing five. It must be quite obvious that as the session proceeded many circumstances might arise with regard to foreign or colonial policy, or questions of Irish administration might occur, which would demand in the public interest, and not unreasonably, something more than the three additional days which were to be allotted under the proposed Standing Order. He found from a Return which had been issued with regard to business in Supply last year, that twenty-seven days were given over to Supply. One of these days was taken up with the Vote to Lord Roberts. Of the other twenty-six days, twenty were allotted days. Why should they be tied down arbitrarily this year, and for all subsequent sessions, to three days in addition to the twenty allotted days, when last year they were able to get seven extra days. After the debate of this evening he thought it would be generally conceded that if any Members in the House were interested in getting extra days for Supply, and extra facilities for the discussion of the action of the Executive, they were the Members sitting on the Irish Benches. If five additional days were allowed, they might look forward to a larger share of time for the discussion of the Irish Estimates, but if only three days were given their chances would be very poor indeed. The First Lord of the Treasury seemed to accept the position that Irish grievances should be brought before the House of Commons, and that they had a special claim, owing to centralised administration of Ireland, to a larger amount of time than under other circumstances would be given. But while admitting that, the right hon. Gentleman gave no promise, no indication, and no guarantee that the Irish Members would get more than two or three days out of twenty-five or twenty-six days. He was rather surprised at his own moderation in moving to increase the number of extra days to five only; but he was under the impression that the First Lord of the Treasury would not insist on a hard and fast rule of twenty days. They were now bound down to twenty days, and, that being so, he thought they were entitled to the claim that more than three extra days should be given. It was well known that towards the end of the session there was always pressure of business, and it might happen that of the extra days proposed in the Standing Order, two might be occupied in discussing a Colonial Office or a War Office question, leaving only one day to the general business of Supply, and no Minister or private Member could move for a further day. That was a very arbitrary and unnecessary restriction, and was confining the Committee in Supply to very narrow limits. He thought the Amendment was a very reasonable one, and should commend itself to hon. Members generally.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 19, to leave out the word 'Three,' and insert the word 'Five.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Three' stand part of the Question."

(9.5.) MR. FIELD said the Amendment appeared to him to be deserving of consideration. It would be remembered that last year a very extraordinary scene occurred by reason of the fact that an enormous sum of money was closured without any consideration having been given to it by the House. He held that the Irish Members had a very important duty to perform, altogether different from the duty of Members representing English or Scotch constituencies, by reason of the fact that the administration of Ireland could only come under the purview of the House in discussion of Supply. At the present time, Ireland was governed in a peculiar way which did not apply to Great Britain, and consequently the Irish Members ought to have an opportunity of utilising debates in Supply, in order to bring forward matters which affected their country. There was another argument which might be reasonably adduced, and that was that the business of Supply and the amounts concerned were increasing year by year, and apparently the desire of the Government was that, according as the amount of Supply to be voted increased, the time at the disposal of the House for its consideration should decrease. He thought it was reasonable that, as the demands of the Government increased, the time to be given to the House for their consideration should be correspondingly increased; but apparently the desire of the Government was to escape that criticism which should be exercised by the House. He therefore thought it was reasonable that the Government should grant two extra days. He did not wish to repeat arguments which had been already used, but he thought it would be neither for the benefit of the House nor the country that subjects which required attention should not receive due consideration in the House of Commons. It was the unexpected that always happened Something might occur in connection with the war, or there might be a big scheme of expenditure resulting in long debates, and hon. Members knew that when a debate began it was impossible to tell when it would end. Irish Supply was generally left to the end of the session, with the result that very often the Irish Members got no chance at all of discussing questions of the utmost importance to Ireland. He hoped some expression of opinion would be given that the matter would receive consideration. Considering the circumstances under which Ireland was governed, the Irish Members were entitled to special facilities for criticising the Irish administration, but under the new Rules those facilities would be considerably decreased, and it was, therefore, of the utmost importance that those extra days should be added, in order that the Irish Members might have a better opportunity of discussing questions which were absolutely necessary in order to preserve the administration of Ireland, true, economical and efficient.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said that his hon. friend had been too modest. If he had asked for seven or eight days he might have got five. He wished to know what the Scotch Members thought of the Rule. He was glad the Leader of the House was present because he was a Scotsman and claimed to be a Highlander. Last session only the Vote for the Congested Districts Board was discussed, and all the other Scotch Votes were closured. Two or three years ago private business occupied the time of the House up to a quarter to nine, when Scotch business commenced, and Scotland had to be content with three and a quarter hours discussion. That was how Scotland was served, and he maintained that Scotland ought not to be treated in that way. He would not grudge Ireland three or four days, but surely Scotland was entitled to a couple of days or to one clear day at least. The Government would be in no worse position if they accepted the Amendment, but the hard and fast rule that was now proposed would not work satisfactorily. He said it was not right or proper that millions of money should be passed through the House without being discussed for even five minutes. Hitherto he had resorted to questions as a means of getting information; but the right hon Gentleman was now about to curtail that means, though whether he would be successful or not remained to be seen. It was a farce for Scotch Members to spend their time in the House on the chance of getting two or three hours for the discussion of Scotch votes, and he sincerely hoped his hon. friend would press this Amendment to a division.

(9.15.) THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk) said he thought there was some slight misunderstanding in the matter. Hon. Members had spoken as if the Rule were to be a hard and fast one, and that only twenty-three days could by any possibility be given to Supply. But the hon. Member for North Cork himself mentioned that twenty-six days had been given to Supply last session, though he believed himself that the figure should be thirty-six; but, at any rate, twenty-six days as the hon. Member said, and thirty-six as he contended, were given to Supply last year when the proposed Rule was a sessional Order. [MR. FLYNN said his statement was that twenty-six days altogether, including Supplementary Estimates, were given.] His point was that it was unreasonable to contend that only twenty-three days could be given to Supply under the new Rule when last year from twenty-six to thirty days were given it, when it was a sessional Order. If, towards the end of the session, it was admitted on all hands that further time should be given to Supply, it would be the easiest thing in the world to arrange it. He was not going to say a word as to the difficulty which his Irish colleagues had in expressing their views to the House. The hon. Member who just sat down spoke of the difficulties of Scotch Members, but he had the pleasure of sitting in the Chair during the consideration of Scotch Estimates, and he was perfectly sure that he constantly heard the hon. Member discussing Scotch questions. As many days as possible within a reasonable limit had been given to Supply, and the Government could not accept the Amendment.

* MR. HEMPHILL said he could not understand the argument of the hon. Gentleman, who appeared to have misconstrued the meaning of the Rule altogether. The Rule expressed that twenty days should be allotted for Supply, that was the *prima facie* limit. Then there was a provision that three more days might be allotted for that purpose. If the Rule had any meaning at all it meant that only three days should be allotted. He considered that the Amendment was quite reasonable. The House of Commons ought to be the place where the most important business of the Empire ought to be discussed, but it appeared to him to be more like a great school, the great object of which was to have its holidays accelerated as much as possible. All that the objections came to was that the session might be prolonged two days. It really seemed absurd that when the interests of the greatest Empire of the world were concerned—the money interests, because, after all, it was the due proportion between revenue and the expenditure which was the basis of all the prosperity of this Empire—they had to be compressed into a sort of procrustean bed in this manner. He was much afraid that the object of this Rule was to hide the conduct of the executive in the management of the affairs of the nation. He was himself against any limit, and, therefore, he would be logical in supporting an Amendment which mitigated to a certain degree the evil complained of.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said the hon. Member had not appreciated the point raised by his hon. friend. There were many occasions on which some small bill was put down first, and after it was disposed of, Supply was discussed. That was not an allotted day, but it was a day upon which Supply was discussed. To say the discussions upon Supply were confined to twenty-three days was to state that which was not the fact. He deprecated the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman that the object of the Rule was to stifle criticism of the way in which Ministers conducted the affairs of the country. He did not think the Irish Members could be accused with justice of not bringing their grievances before the House. Apart from Supply they never lost an opportunity of moving the adjournment of the House; still less did they lose an opportunity of putting questions and supplementary questions to a very large extent. To suggest that any Minister of the Crown could shelter himself under this Rule from full investigation of his conduct was entirely contrary to what the working of the Rule had proved to be the fact.

(9.25.) MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that the importance of this proposal was much increased by the fact that for all time it was to be the accepted Rule of the House. He was sorry to see the hon. Member come forward to champion Ministers; he liked him much better when he was opposing the Government and better still when he defeated them as he did recently. It was not the position of the present Government that they had to consider, they had to look to the future, and he was surprised at the assertion of the hon. Member that the Rule had worked well so far as the twenty-three days were concerned. Was the hon. Gentleman aware that ninety-seven Votes were not discussed at all last year? Yet they were told the Rule worked splendidly. The right hon. Gentleman who was responsible for the limitation of that time had done everything in his power to make the Rule a success, but it was impossible because there was too much work to be done in that time. There were too many Votes to be discussed. He should vote for the Amendment because it gave greater latitude, he thought, to the Minister in charge. Another reason for his voting for it was that the Estimates were increasing every year, and if necessary the time for discussing them must be extended. It seemed to him that the present system of having practically no discussion at all, was calculated to make public servants more careless than they might otherwise be. Some Votes had not been discussed for four or five years. They were not Votes which ought not to be discussed; many were Votes which ought to be discussed, but no opportunity had been allowed for discussion at all. It had been suggested that this Rule was for the purpose of sheltering Ministers; but that was a point which happily they need not discuss at the present time, but he could conceive the possibility of the time arriving when Ministers might limit a discussion to one Vote, and the time might be absorbed by an interesting Question, and the administration might not be discussed at all. During the last few years there had been no discussion of the Scotch Estimates. There had been perhaps half a day given to them, or two or three hours after dinner, and the result was that half-a-dozen important Scotch Votes were not discussed at all. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to make the concession asked for.

*MR. CHAPLIN said the reason there was no adequate discussion of the Scotch Votes was that there was so much superfluous talk. He had known hours wasted in discussing most trivial points. He had always held the opinion that if the time taken up in discussing the Estimates was spent in a business-like manner, twenty days would be ample for that purpose. He had intended to move the omission of this proviso, in the hope of inducing the right hon Gentleman to adhere to the twenty days. That was the original proposal on this question, but it had been violated session after session by the concession of three additional days. Earlier in the evening, however, the Leader of the House had indicated that he might consider the propriety of allotting one day more than were usually given to the discussion of Irish estimates. If, therefore, he moved his Amendment later on, he would propose to cut off two days only instead of three. Attention had been called to the passing of ninety-seven votes without discussion. None regretted that fact more than he did. It was a terrible reflection on the proceedings of the House as a business assembly. But the only result of going back to the old practice would be that no Government would ever get its Supply at all. ["There is the closure."] General closure—yes! Of what us would that be? He admitted that if the Government would make up its mind to devise proposals for stopping obstruction, which these Rules would never do, to check dilatory speeches and superfluous talk, it might be possible to go back to the old practice, but, short of that, in the present condition of the House of Commons nothing could be more fatal than the abandonment of this Rule.

(9.40.) MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said it was a singular thing, in view of the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman opposite of trivial discussions on matters of little importance, the greatest amount of time occupied by Supply after the 5th

August was in the session of 1893. The right hon. Gentleman and his friends were then in Opposition, and they occupied, not four, but fourteen days after that date in discussing Estimates. According to the right hon. Gentleman's own statement, they deliberately wasted ten days of Parliamentary time in discussing questions of no importance. The whole point in this matter was one of arithmetic. The first Estimates were presented about the end of February, and, taking last session as an example, the Vote on Account was presented about March 15. From that time forward to August 5 there were about twenty-two Fridays—or Thursdays under the new regime—for the purposes of Supply. It was therefore clear that the number of allotted days before August 5 could not be increased with any expectation of success; consequently the number would have to be increased after that date. He had taken out the number of days given to Supply after August 5 under the four last Administrations, and he found that in 1890 it was seven; in 1893, fourteen; in 1895, ten; while last session, under the Rule of 1896, the number was cut down to four. The First Lord was not being unduly pressed by this request for an extension from three to five days. More time was not being asked for, but simply that of the time allotted, which was admitted to be thirty-five or thirty-six days, a large portion should be permanently fixed by the Standing Orders of the House. There would be no more time actually allotted to Supply, but there would be an increase in the allotted minimum. It was impossible for a Minister to anticipate the needs of a coming session. Not only would there be matters of legislation, but from time to time questions would crop up demanding the consideration of Motions which would raise discussions on different estimates every year, varying both in character and in extent. The time ought not, therefore, to be cut down to a minimum smaller than that which in practice obtained.

MR. BARTLEY said that when this Rule was first introduced he objected to it, because he was convinced that whatever was fixed as a maximum would tend to become the minimum. In the early days of his Parliamentary life Supply used to be voted in a peculiar manner. Comparatively few days were devoted to it, and the morning light used generally to be coming through the windows before the House adjourned. Under this Rule they had certainly had more time for the discussion of Supply, but, owing to the unfortunate practice of naming a certain number of days, that number was looked upon as a minimum instead of being regarded as a large increase compared with former times. During its first year, the Rule worked fairly well, and comparatively few Votes were guillotined, but now certain sections of the House—certainly the Irish Members—rather glorified in the number of Votes that were guillotined. ["No."] In olden days, although they were not guillotined, he had seen Votes passed by the score by simply being read at the Table, so the result was practically the same. Everybody wanted to get away, the Votes were not discussed, and millions of money were voted as rapidly as possible. The time allotted under the present Rule, if properly used, would afford much more opportunity for discussion than was formerly enjoyed, but if Members would persist in discussing small matters year after year, the result would, of course, be unsatisfactory. He regretted that the twenty days had been increased even by three. No doubt, in cases of emergency, an increased number might be reasonable, but where the number was fixed at twenty, or thirty, or forty, the result, in a few years, would be the same—it would be looked upon as the minimum. The difficulties under this Rule arose from the fact that certain Members openly avowed their intention of setting all Rules at defiance, so that the House might be brought into contempt and disrepute in the eyes of the country, and as long as that spirit prevailed it would be impossible to carry any legislation, and no revision of Rules would ever do much good.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) thought the House should take into consideration the present financial position of the country. For ten years he had been a Member of the House,

but he was still just as much lost in wonderment at the manner in which the financial business of the nation was conducted as on the day he first entered the House. He had had a good deal to do with financial matters, but he had never known a business or commercial undertaking to manage its financial affairs as did the House of Commons; indeed, if any such undertaking did so manage its affairs, it would find itself in pecuniary difficulties before a single session had elapsed. Anyone looking through the Estimates and endeavouring to gauge the financial position of the country, would, if he were at all a financial purist, have a feeling almost of horror at the fashion in which nearly all the Estimates were presented to the House and dealt with. He thought that the financial condition of the country rendered it necessary to have additional days for Supply. They should give to the consideration of the Estimates every possible moment they could. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford had described some of their discussions upon the Royal palaces as superfluous and unnecessary, but no less than fifteen of those votes were closured last year without any discussion whatever. A full, complete, and drastic discussion upon all those matters was of the greatest importance. The whole taxation of the country depended upon the manner in which this House spent the money which was collected from the tax-payers. Even the normal expenditure of the country had increased by £32,000,000 since the present Government came into office, and unless facilities were afforded them for checking this ever-increasing expenditure, it would prove very disastrous to the country in the near future. They had been reproved by the hon. Member for North Islington for their action in endeavouring to increase the number of days allotted to Supply, but he would remind the House that, in the hon. Member for King's Lynn, the President of the Board of Agriculture, and the hon. Member for North Islington himself, the House in the past had a trio which had never been surpassed in this respect. He remembered an occasion when a leading hon. Member on the opposite—

Mr. George Whiteley.

* MR. SPEAKER: I must say that the hon. Member is now going into matters which do not arise on this Amendment.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said he was only answering the contention of the hon. Member for North Islington. The time devoted to the discussion of the financial affairs was not lost, for the sheet anchor of the constitution of this country was the economical administration of its financial business. Twenty-three days as the maximum was not sufficient to deal with the increasing volume of financial business which the House of Commons was now called upon to administer, and he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman would be well advised if he gave way upon this point.

(10.0.) MR A. J. BALFOUR: May I make an appeal to the House to remember that this is a question which has been gone over several times. I agree with the importance of the subject, but I think hon. Gentlemen might limit the discussion to the very important question as to whether there should be some fixed period. Really most of the speeches which have been made upon this Amendment seem to be altogether out of place. Several times I have put forward a calculation to show that the arrangement proposed is necessary to carry on the business of the session. It is clear that in a session of six months in an assembly of 670 gentlemen, it is impossible that individual scope can be given to each to discuss any subject arising within the affairs of the Empire in which he is interested. In view of the calculations I have laid before the House, I should not be doing my duty if I were to assent to the proposal. Good nature would prompt me to that course, but I cannot, consistently with the principles I have ventured to advocate on this Rule, do so, and I must resist the Amendment.

MR. DILLON said he rose to suggest that they should now come to a division upon this point. He should not have intervened at all, only there was a limit to human patience, and when the hon. Member for North Islington lectured the Irish Members for excessive discussions in Supply, he

could only say that the ancient simile of Satan reproving Sin sank into absolute insignificance.

(10.1.) Question proposed.

The House divided:—Ayes, 162; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 135.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hn. Eden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir Michael H.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Bull, William James
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir. Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Rbt. Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. G R C Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S Edm'ds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J. F. (Sh'ffield, Brightside
Howard, John (Kent, Fav'rsh'm
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawson, John Grant
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Macartney, Rt Hn. W. G Ellison
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B. (Cambs
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hnr E. R. (Bath)
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Allen, Chas. P. (Glouc., Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John

Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jones, William (Carnarvon)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Leamy, Edmund
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Thomas Esmonde and
Captain Donelan.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 19, to leave out the words 'purposes aforesaid,' and insert the words 'business of Supply.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn—

(10.18.) MR. FLYNN moved an Amendment providing that on a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply shall be taken before midnight, unless it is unopposed, thereby omitting from the Rule the words "except on the last two of the allotted days." He asked an explanation why these words had been inserted. The keynote of the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury was that they were to have absolute certainty what business was to be brought before the House. The proposal was that they were to come down to the House on these particular days for the business of Supply, and yet the Government might at the last moment put down some other business, so that the House would not be sure of getting more than twenty-one days.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 22, to leave out the words 'except on the last two allotted days.'"—(*Mr. Flynn.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR stated that the Standing Order was framed on the hypothesis that business in Supply would be taken on the whole of the allotted days, and that on each of the two final days the discussion would terminate at ten o'clock. It must be, and he hoped it would be, that the House would not expend much time in passing the Votes which then remained to be disposed of. If after the closure of Supply on the two final days there was still some time available before midnight, it would be immensely for the convenience of all parties that they should get on with business, and it seemed a pity that two hours should be entirely wasted.

MR. DILLON said that under the old system, if the business of Supply was finished on the last two nights at half-past ten, hon. Members could get away home early as a reward for their forbearance in not dividing the House. Now the Government came in their extreme parsimony of time and proposed on the last two nights of Supply to depart from the Rule which had been laid down for their guidance that no other business should be taken on the days allotted for

Supply. In that way Members had been safeguarded against having important Government business brought on after the business of Supply when that was got through unexpectedly early. Now it was proposed to keep hon. Members there on the last two nights of Supply on the off-chance—for it was only an off-chance—that there might be one, two, or conceivably three hours, which the Government could devote to other business. It was most absurd for the Government to make any change in that respect. The only result of the scheme would be that instead of the Government getting the time they hoped for, hon. Members would be kept going through the Division Lobbies for the purpose of blocking Government business.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the paragraph now under consideration and the following ones were entirely new inventions, and they certainly did require some scrutiny. He could not see why this exception was here introduced. He held that no other business should be allowed to intrude on the days which had been allotted for Supply. The proviso with respect to the last two of the allotted days should be omitted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said it was certain that in practice no other business would be done after ten o'clock on these two days. The matter was not worth fighting about, and he would accept the Amendment.

Question put, and negatived.

(10.28.) MR. GALLOWAY moved that the words "unless it is unopposed" be left out of the fifth paragraph of the Standing Order on business in Supply. He explained that the object of the Amendment was merely to secure that the days set down for Supply should be devoted entirely to Supply, and that no other business should be taken on those days. There might be Private Members' Bills down on the Paper, and if they could be taken on Supply nights hon. Members would not know when they were coming on, because they would not know when the business of Supply was going to terminate. He reminded the House that the Child Messenger Bill was taken when Supply was finished at an early period of the evening, and after some Members had gone away under the impression that no other business would be taken that night. The result was that the House passed the Second Reading while those who desired to express their views upon it were entirely unable to do so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he would accept the Amendment.

Amendment made, in lines 22 and 23, by leaving out the words "unless it is unopposed."—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

MR. GIBSON BOWLES, who was received with laughter and cries of "Oh, oh!" on the Ministerial side of the House, said he objected to be treated in this way by hon. Members who were not interested in the subject and who came in late at night. [Cries of "Order."] He and others were endeavouring to do their duty by this House in connection with matters which were extremely difficult. The paragraph as it now stood read thus —

"On a day so allotted, no business other than the business of Supply shall be taken before midnight, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general order for the suspension of the Twelve o'Clock Rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate."

The Leader of the House when introducing the Rules said that one of the purposes in view was that Supply night should always end at twelve o'clock. He thought that was an extremely salutary Rule, especially as Thursday, when Supply was to be taken, was followed by the morning sitting on Friday. It was therefore important that the Rule should be made so as to secure that Supply day should be for Supply alone, and that it should end at twelve o'clock on Thursday. He believed he was right in saying that the intention of the First Lord of the Treasury was that business on Supply night should end at twelve o'clock. That was one of the great inducements his right hon. friend had held out to the House. There was another reason, and that was that the sitting next day commenced at twelve o'clock. He trusted, therefore, his right hon. friend would accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 23, to leave out the words, 'in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply, and insert the word 'whatever.'"

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I entirely sympathise with my hon. friend's desire to get to bed. This portion of the Rule is intended to apply to that period of the session when the Twelve o'Clock Rule is generally suspended; when the whole programme of the Government has been developed, and when the chief desire of Members is to get away for the holidays. If the Amendment were passed, it would be impossible for the House of Commons to do any work after midnight. It is proposed under the new Rule that the business of Supply shall stop at twelve o'clock; but if it was the general view of the House that it was necessary to sit on for other business, I do not see why the House should be precluded from doing so by a Standing Order without a special Resolution. After twelve o'clock, small Government measures can be advanced, and why should we compel ourselves to have a Resolution whenever we desire to sit after twelve o'clock. I think the Amendment proposed would be a great inconvenience, and not a help.

MR. DILLON said he hoped the hon. Member would go to a division on the Amendment, as he considered it extremely important. He was afraid many hon. Members did not see the force of the Amendment, or the evil against which it was directed. What was really involved? Under the old Rule, the time during which the House sat on an allotted day after twelve o'clock was additional time given to Supply, but under the new Rule discussion of Supply would be cut off at twelve o'clock, and after discussion in Supply was finished the House was to be asked to sit up for the consideration of other business. That was a most unreasonable proposal. The right hon. Gentleman was wrong in saying that if the Amendment were accepted it would be impossible to discuss Government Bills after midnight on an allotted day towards the end of the session, because the Rule states—

"Unless the House otherwise orders on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown."

It would be still open to the Government to move a Motion to suspend the Twelve o'Clock Rule without discussion. Surely that was not too much to ask. He would never attempt to deprive the Leader of the House of the right to move the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule in special cases. All that was asked was that the normal position of things should be that on Supply nights business should stop at twelve o'clock, leaving the Government absolute power on those nights to move the suspension of the Twelve o'Clock Rule by special Motion.

(10.35.) MR. JAMES LOWTHER said the hon. Member who had just sat down appeared to have no objection to practically the wholesale suspension of the Standing Order.

MR. DILLON said the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly mistaken. What he said was that he would never be a party to depriving the Leader of the House of the power to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule *ad hoc.* What he objected to was the establishment of a wholesale system of suspension of the Rule.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said that one of his complaints was that when the House framed Rules under great difficulties they were not observed, but were being constantly suspended. That resulted in very great confusion. It seemed to him that his right hon. friend intended to confine the sittings to midnight. He said so quite clearly, and he hoped he would stand by his own words. His right hon. friend said that Supply night was a night which, throughout the session, and irrespective of the chances and changes of the session or whether Supply was being discussed in Committee or Report, should always end at twelve o'clock.

MR. DILLON said that the proposition was that after Supply other Government business should be commenced.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said the Leader of the House went a great deal further, because he said that in his view a Supply night should end at twelve o'clock always. Of course it was possible that there might be exceptions occasionally. Therefore, he would not preclude absolutely suspending the Rule sometimes, but he hoped it was not

intended that after a certain period of the session there should be a wholesale suspension of the Rule. The great difficulty was that the Rules were applied in a fast and loose manner. Day after day notices were put on the Paper for suspending them for some ephemeral convenience of the Government. He hoped his hon. friend's Motion would be accepted in some form or another.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said he, too, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider his position. He was extremely jealous of the Twelve o'clock Rule, and, like the right hon. Gentleman, he wished to get to bed. He would rather meet earlier than sit later. He would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he had landed himself in a difficulty by the last Amendment, which laid down that the House should proceed with no business, even unopposed business, before twelve o'clock on Supply nights. Why, then, should opposed business be taken after midnight? If the right hon. Gentleman really wanted a discussion, he could suspend the Rule. He hoped that Thursdays would be reserved solely for the purposes of Supply, and that other business would not be taken after midnight.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said he desired to point out that the words proposed to be omitted did not touch the question of the time allocated to Supply, but merely reserved the same power as to business after twelve o'clock as on nights not allotted to Supply. The Amendment, if accepted, would make it impossible to take even unopposed business after midnight on Supply nights.

MR. LOUGH said he thought that hon. Members generally did not appreciate the seriousness of what was now proposed. The Standing Order said that on the allotted day no business, except Supply, was to be taken before midnight. That meant an absolute change in the practice which had been followed during the last six years, as it differed from the sessional Order which every year for the last six years had been accepted by the House. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is much better.] The right hon. Gentleman said it was much better, but, at any rate, it was an absolute change in the system which had obtained for six years. The change was that on Supply nights, after midnight, other business could be begun without notice. If the right hon. Gentleman wanted to secure a discussion after twelve o'clock, he could do it by a Motion which would be passed without discussion. All certainty as to twenty-three days of the session would be destroyed if the Amendment were not accepted. Any night, other business might be taken without notice. One of the main advantages of the Rule would be destroyed if the Amendment were rejected, and he begged the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider the matter.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) said he, too, hoped the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider his position. It was an extremely bad proposal, when Supply had been discussed up to midnight, to introduce a fresh topic then. Moreover, he understood that no other business could be taken before twelve o'clock on Thursdays. What would happen if the proceedings on Supply stopped at ten o'clock?

MR. BARTLEY asked whether it would be possible on the last day of the session to bring in the Appropriation Bill. If the Rules said that no business could be done then, it would mean that the Appropriation Bill could not be brought in, and under those circumstances the session might last another day. Although he agreed that no business should be done after twelve generally, an exception ought to be made in respect to the Appropriation Bill.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE considered that the question asked by the hon. Member for Pontefract was a practical question, and required to be met.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he was not quite so sure as to the question raised by the hon. Member for North Islington, but the question raised by the hon. Member for Pontefract was a substantial question. It was impossible that such a thing could arise, because the question must be under discussion at twelve o'clock.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said although the right hon. Gentleman had stated the general form of the operation of the Rule, that need not be the meaning contemplated by the paragraph under discussion, and a Motion might perfectly well be framed to allow business to be carried on.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not consider that was a practical point. It pre-supposed that a Minister might come down as late, say, as May, and move that the Twelve o'clock Rule be suspended, but no Minister would do that, because it was a debatable Motion.

MR GIBSON BOWLES: Not under this Rule.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR thought the hon. Member had not read the Rule aright. There were occasions when the Twelve o'clock Rule could be suspended. There was the general suspension of the Rule when the session was drawing to a close, when the ordinary limitations of debate were brought to an end, and there was the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule in the course of the session. The hon. Member suggested that in the ordinary course of the session a Minister might come down and move the suspension of the Rule in a form which might be debatable.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that in the Rule were the words "unless the House otherwise order."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR thought his hon. friend had mistaken the effect of the words he had quoted. They meant whether Supply should go on—not whether general business should go on.

MR. BARTLEY: Would the right hon. Gentleman put in words excluding the discussion on the Appropriation Bill, so as to save a day.

(10.58.) Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 191; Noes, 108. (Division List No. 136.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir Michael H.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A G H. (City of Lond.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(S'lop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton, Marqof (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Howard, Jno. (Kent, Faversh'm
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B. (Cambs
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesh)

Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, David J (W'lthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd U niv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wallace, Robert
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, John Cathcart (O'kney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E. (Taunton
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allen, Charles P (Glouc. Stroud.
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jones, William Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South.)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ry Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sosres, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

(11.11.) MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that nothing could be more definite than the repeated declarations of the Leader of the House that the discussion of Supply was to end at midnight, and yet, by the wording of this Rule, the Government were to have power to prolong the sitting practically whenever they chose. At any moment, on a Motion being made, without opportunity of Amendment or debate, the Government could call on the House to decide

that on that particular night Supply should be taken after midnight. His right hon. friend might say that in making his statement, he meant unless the House otherwise ordered. His words, however, were not qualified in that way, and nobody so understood them. He much disliked moving further Amendments, as the right hon. Gentleman had been very accessible to argument; but in order to hear what he might say, he would move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed-

"In line 25, after the word 'not,' to leave out the words to the word 'debate,' in line 28, inclusive."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend has quoted the speech I delivered in bringing these Rules before the House, but I think he has based more upon that statement than it will bear or ought to be expected to bear. That speech was a general explanation of the policy of the Government, and it was immediately followed by the Rules themselves, printed in a form which everybody could understand. It is perfectly true that the policy of the Government is that Supply should end at twelve o'clock, whether it be in Committee or on Report, but we feel that there may be circumstances under which the House would like an extension of the debate, and it would be a great pity if we had not the power to grant that extension. I hope, therefore, apologising for any misapprehension I may have caused by my introductory speech, my hon. friend will not press his Amendment.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER supposed that in the event of the business of Supply collapsing before midnight it would not be possible for private Members to proceed with these measures.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that such measures could not be brought forward before twelve o'clock, and after twelve o'clock they could be stopped in the usual way.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

(11.20.) MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he desired to move an Amendment which would have the effect of omitting the limitation to one day of proceedings on Votes of Account, whether in Committee or on Report. Such a limitation was absolutely new, and it was the most important new proposal in the Rule. It would establish an exceptional procedure for Votes on Account. Hitherto a certain number of days had been allotted to Supply as a whole; no particular portion had been limited to one, two, or three days, as the case might be, and the House were entitled to have some explanation of why this part of Supply should be selected for exceptional treatment. The Vote on Account applied mainly to the Civil Service Estimates. What corresponded to it in regard to the Army and Navy Estimates were Votes 1 and 2 in each case, which were always taken at the beginning of the session. No limitation of time was to be placed on the discussion of those Votes, and if it was not necessary in regard to the Army and Navy, why should it be necessary in regard to the corresponding Vote for the Civil Service? But an even more substantial objection to the proposal was that based on the excessive size of the Vote on Account under the existing practice of the House. In former times the Vote on Account was not allowed to contain more than two months Supply; this year it covered at least five months. That practice had disadvantages of its own; and it resulted in the dislocation of the business of the House in regard to Supply. He asked hon. Members seriously to consider whether, when several Votes were merged into one, and that one Vote covered Supply sufficient for the whole session, it was a proper time to introduce this exceptional treatment. The Vote on Account this session was probably the largest in the history of Parliament. The Consolidated Fund Bill, No. 1, contained Votes amounting in the aggregate to a perfectly appalling sum. In 1894 the amount covered by the Consolidated Fund Bill, No. 1, was £9,497,000; this year the corresponding Bill covered the enormous sum of £68,181,600. The House could hardly be aware that it had already voted that amount of Supply. The Vote

on Account was £19,000,000, or just double the amount of eight years ago. In moving this Amendment, there was one suggestion he would make. If the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to give favourable consideration to another Amendment standing lower on the Paper, by which it was laid down that no Vote on Account should exceed two months Supply, he would be prepared to withdraw his present Amendment. If, however, the Government intended to adhere to the practice of bringing in only one Vote on Account, involving an enormous sum, it was not reasonable that the House should be asked to sanction this alteration of procedure. It would be better if Votes on Account were excluded from this Rule. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name, omitting the proposed Rule limiting the discussion on any Vote on Account to one day.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 29, to leave out from the words 'Of the days so allotted,' to the words 'Vote or the Report,' in line 35, both inclusive."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am quite sure that the hon. Gentleman will see that there is more ground for this change than at first sight he appears to suppose. It is true that under the old system Votes on Account were brought in perhaps every two months, but that was the inevitable result of the old system, which piled up Supply at the end of the session; and it is absolutely necessary now for the Government to get, by Votes on Account, money to carry on the administration of the country. Now that Supply is evenly distributed and that in each week there is an opportunity of dealing with it, the old necessity has passed away, and with the old necessity the old practice. The hon. Gentleman goes on to ask why it is provided in this Rule that the Vote on Account should be closured. I will give him a very simple reason, which I will preface by reminding him that when Votes on Account were first introduced into this House they were not regarded as occasions for discussion at all. They were simply regarded in anticipation of the Votes the House would be asked to discuss later on, and they simply asked the House meanwhile to give the Government the money to carry on the business of the country. Those Votes on Account were always given without discussion, but it was afterwards found to be in order to have discussions upon them. Under these circumstances I ask whether it is not better that the House should devote its time to a discussion in Supply of twenty-three allocated Votes than engage in an absolutely disorderly discussion without beginning and without end, upon a single Motion upon which every other question raised can properly be discussed. I think that is a strong practical reason why we should carry out this Rule. There are two additional reasons. Consider in what position you put the Chairman of Committees if you do not lay down the length of time. The Chairman of Committees is asked in granting the closure whether the question has been adequately discussed. Upon what principle is the Chairman to decide that question? It is not fair to ask the Chairman to decide whether a sufficient proportion of the time has been given to any subject. Therefore, in order to make that clear, I say it is desirable to lay down that the discussion shall come to an end after a certain time. There is a further reason which I am sure the House will appreciate. The Government have endeavoured of late years to make the discussion of Votes on Account as orderly as possible by putting down first some subject which we believe to be of special interest, and often Gentlemen who have other questions to raise feel they have a great grievance if the closure is moved. I therefore think it should be made clear by the Standing Orders that the debate is limited. There is no desire to curtail the liberties of the House by the alteration, but only to secure the orderly discussion of Supply and some relief to those who preside over the debates.

*(11.30.) SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he wished to call attention to a habit which had sprung up of late of taking one item in the Vote on Account

and discussing it at length at that time instead of taking it when the Vote came up in due course. They had an example of this last year, when an Amendment was moved on the Educational Vote, and under the Rules of the House any hon. Member was out of order if he alluded to any other question upon that Vote not connected with education. The debate he referred to went on until twelve o'clock, when the First Lord of the Treasury came in and closured the Vote. If any responsible Minister had been in the House during the whole of the debate, he would have pointed out that it was absolutely necessary that the Vote on Account must be passed that night, and he would have suggested to hon. Members that it would have been better that the debate on the Educational Vote should cease at a certain time, and then other hon. Members who had anything to say upon the Vote on Account as such would have had an opportunity of doing so. He thought that any responsible Leader would have taken that course instead of coming into the House and closing items amounting to some £17,000,000. The amount of Supply had gradually grown, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would agree that these were matters which the House ought to be allowed full opportunities of discussing. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would admit the necessity of discussing whether five or six months Supply was too much to be taken in one lump sum. He wished also to call attention to the new Votes. The object of a Vote on Account was that the current services should be carried on, and that the collection of the revenues should proceed. Such Votes were necessary in order that the work of the Treasury, the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, and other public Offices should proceed without interruption. That was the object of Votes on Account; but certainly no new works of a controversial character should be put in Votes on Account. Last year there was included a Vote for the Gladstone monument, and, although he did not think any hon. Member wished to question that expenditure, it was undoubtedly the constitutional right of the House that any hon. Member should be able to move the rejection of the whole of that Vote, and if it had been a Cromwell monument they would probably have had considerable opposition on the part of some hon. Members. The position would have been that they could not have rejected the Vote for that monument without rejecting the whole of the Vote on Account. He would not move any Amendment, but he should be very glad if this paragraph could be so worded that the discussion of the Vote on Account should be limited to the questions of the total amount of the Vote, and of the introduction of new or controversial services.

MR BRYCE thought this was the proper occasion to call attention to the extent to which the new Rules were making everything much more fixed and definitely settled automatically. He regretted that instead of relying partly upon the general sense of the House and partly upon the closure, which could always be moved when a proper case had been made out, a sort of automatic closure was now being adopted. A short discussion at a time when the Vote on Account was taken might be worth a great deal more than the prospect of a discussion later on. The right hon. Gentleman stated that it would be a disagreeable duty if the Chairman was asked to decide the closure. He wished to point out that the usage of the House generally fixed when the closure was to be applied, and when it was thought that a discussion ought not to exceed a day the Chairman or the Speaker ruled accordingly, and they seldom found it difficult in deciding what the sense and feeling of the House required. He was more inclined to rely upon the sense and usage of the House and the usage of the Chair, but the tendency of these Rules seemed to him to be to introduce automatic closure, which placed them in a coat of heavy armour which made the conducting of their business far more difficult than it was before. It was because he thought the new Rule would have this tendency that he should support the Amendment of his hon. friend if a division were taken.

(11.40.) MR. DILLON thought there was great force in what had been said as to the desirability of fixing in the Rule the length of time which a debate on a Vote on Account was to last, thus

elieving the Chair of the duty of applying the closure to a discussion which might have only just commenced. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to convey a false impression in regard to the history on Votes on Account because up to the advent of the present Government Votes on Account never exceeded more than two months of Supply, which were taken at intervals of about two months, and they never exceeded more than about £4,000,000 or £5,000,000. He thought the old practice was a good one. Therefore he thought the real fault had been in taking such an enormous Vote on Account, which undoubtedly had on more than one occasion given rise to the greatest possible irritation on the part of Members of the House. The First Lord of the Treasury had admitted that he recognised it was natural and inevitable in taking Votes on Account that hon. Members should feel a deep sense of injury when they were closured on a matter which they considered very important. He must say that the change was a great and marked improvement, because nothing could be more futile and absurd than the old system of allowing the affairs of China or East Mayo to be discussed by different speakers in connection with the same Vote.

(11.43.) Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 186 ; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 137.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Hen. Eden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thomas H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond- (Camlbs.)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nder'y
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashfo'd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Howard, Jno. (Kent, Faversham
Jebb, Sir Richard (Claverhouse
Keswick, William
Lawrence, Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawson, John Grant
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Calmont, Col. H. L. B (Cambs.
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morgan, David J (Walthamst'w
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donal Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pemberton, John S. G.
Penn, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson

Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Round, James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur Ormskirk)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt. Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allen, Charles P. (Glouc., Stroud
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Lambert, George
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tip'erary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Norton and Mr. Warner.

(11.55.) MR. CHANNING moved an Amendment, of which the hon. Member for West Islington had given notice, to omit the following portion of the Standing Order—

"At midnight on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the Sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report."

He said the Amendment was practically to exclude the proposal with respect to the automatic guillotining of outstanding votes. The Leader of the House, or the Minister in charge of a Vote always had the power of moving the ordinary closure of debates in Supply. He had since 1896 always protested against the automatic guillotine, and having seen the disadvantage of that form of closure, and being convinced that it was a thoroughly unsound principle to apply either to legislation or Votes in Supply he objected to the proposal now made.

It being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CVI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill was originated in the Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Lord Raglan*	Read 1ª 14th April (122) Read 2ª 17th April (455) Committee 18th April (628) Read 3ª and passed 21st April (777)
County Courts (Ireland) [H.L.]	*Lord Ashbourne*	Committee 15th April (266)
Divorce [H.L.]	*Earl Russell*	Read 1° 18th April (627)
Land Valuation (Scotland) Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Balfour*	Read 1° 22nd April (912)
*Marine Insurance [H.L.]	*The Lord Chancellor*	Read 2ª 17th April (457) Committee 18th April (629)
*Matrimonial Causes Act Amendment [H.L.]	*The Lord Chancellor*	Read 2ª 17th April (558) Read 3ª and passed 24th April (1164)
Musical Copyright [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 2ª 17th April (455) Committee 18th April (629) Report 24th April (1148) Read 3ª and passed 25th April (1316)
*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*The Lord Chancellor*	Committee 17th April (458) Report 24th April (1164) Read 3ª and passed 25th April (1316)
Shops (Early Closing) No. 2 [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 1ª 14th April (122)

(B.) House of Commons.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act (1899) Amendment	*Mr. Carvill*	Read 1° 18th April (660)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Beer	*Mr. Tomlinson*	Second Reading defeated 22nd April (1077)
Contempt of Court	*Mr. P. A. M'Hugh*	Read 1° 25th April (1271)
Day Industrial Schools (Ireland)	*Mr. Harrington*	Read 1° 17th April (623)
Employers and Workmen's Act (1875) Amendment	*Mr. Bell*	Read 1° 22nd April (953)
Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment [H.L.]	*Mr. Tenant*	Read 1° 22nd April (953)
Fisheries (Ireland) Act Amendment	*Mr. Seton-Karr*	Read 1° 22nd April (953)
Grocers' Licences (Scotland)	*Sir John Leng*	Read 1° 21st April (817)
Highways	*Mr. Bill*	Read 1° 11th April (22)
Home Industries	*Col. Denny*	Bill Withdrawn 11th April (21)
Home Industries [No. 2]	*Col. Denny*	Read 1° 11th April (21)
Land Dedication	*Lord Balcarres*	Read 1° 16th April (660)
Local Government (Wales, Monmouthshire)	*Mr. Edwards*	Second Reading defeated 16th April (383)
Meat Marking (Ireland)	*Mr. Field*	Read 2° 17th April (451)
Old Age Pensions [No. 2]	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 15th April (291)
Parliamentary Voters (Registration)	*Mr. Cremer*	Read 1° 22nd April (953)
Poor Law Officers' Superannuation (Scotland)	*Mr. Maxwell*	Read 1° 25th April (1272)
Poor Law Superannuation (Ireland)	*Mr. O'Malley*	Read 1° 11th April (111)
Prevention of Pollution of Rivers and Streams	*Sir Francis Powell*	Read 1° 25th April (1338)
Public Health	*Sir Francis Powell*	Read 1° 25th April (1338)
Public Libraries (Ireland)	*Mr. Dillon*	Read 1° 25th April (1338)
*Royal Naval Reserve Volunteers	*Mr. Arnold-Forster*	Read 1° 25th April (1338)
Shop Clubs	*Major Evans-Gordon*	Reported 25th April (1265)
Under Sheriffs (Ireland)	*Mr. John Gordon*	Read 1° 11th April (22

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1902.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[In continuation of List in preceding Volume.]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Prisons (Ireland),—Copy of Order in Council approving of Rules made by the General Prisons Board for Ireland for the government of Ordinary Prisons [40 and 41 Vic., c. 49, s. 57 (c)]	7 April	40 days
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Cambridge),—Copy of a Statute made by the Governing Body of Jesus College, Cambridge, under The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877, on 16th December 1901, amending Statutes VII. and IX. of the Statutes of that College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 50]	14 April	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of a Statute made by the Governing Body of Balliol College, Oxford, under The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877, on 10th December 1901, amending Statute V. of the Statutes of that College [25 and 26 Vic., c. 26, s. 7]	14 April	12 weeks
Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899 (Rules for Retreats) (Scotland),—Copy of Rules for Retreats licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1899, in Scotland, dated 14th April 1902, approved by the Secretary for Scotland [61 and 62 Vic., c. 60, s. 21 (1)]	15 April	4 weeks (whilst the House is sitting)

APPENDIX III.

TABLES EXPLANATORY OF THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

(1) Revenue (Exchequer Receipts) and Expenditure (Exchequer Issues) for 1901–1902.

Revenue (Exchequer Receipts)—1901–02.	£	Expenditure (Exchequer Issues)—1901–02.	£
Customs	30,993,000	I. Consolidated Fund Services.	
Inland Revenue:		National Debt Services:	
Excise	31,600,000	A. Inside the fixed charge	18,319,000
Estate, etc., Duties ...	14,200,000	B. Outside the fixed charge	3,367,000
Stamps	7,800,000	Other Consolidated Fund Services	1,644,000
Land Tax	725,000		
House Duty	1,775,000	Payments to Local Taxation Accounts ...	1,153,000
Property and Income Tax (at 1s. 2d. in the £)	34,800,000	**Total Consolidated Fund Services**	**24,483,000**
Total Tax Revenue ...	**121,893,000**	II. Supply Services.	
Post Office	14,300,000	Army (including Ordnance Factories) ...	92,542,000
Telegraph Service ...	3,490,000	Navy	31,030,000
Crown Lands ...	455,000	Civil Services	30,500,000
Suez Canal Share and Cognate Receipts...	870,000	Customs and Inland Revenue	2,955,000
Miscellaneous ...	1,990,000	Post Office	9,240,000
		Telegraph Service ...	4,010,000
Total Non-Tax Revenue...	**21,105,000**	Packet Service	762,000
Total Revenue	**142,998,000**	**Total Supply Services** ...	**171,039,000**
Deficit	**52,524,000**		
	195,522,000	**Total Expenditure** ...	**195,522,000**

Note.—See, for fuller figures, House of Commons Paper 141.

(2) Balance Sheet (Estimated) for 1902–1903 on Basis of Existing Taxation, and before taking into Account the Changes proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Revenue (Exchequer Receipts) 1902–1903.	£	Expenditure (Exchequer Issues) 1902–1903.	£
Customs	32,800,000	I.—Consolidated Fund Services.	
Inland Revenue :		National Debt Services :	
		A. Inside the Fixed Charge	23,000,000
Excise	32,700,000	B. Outside the Fixed Charge	3,650,000
Estate, &c., Duties ...	13,200,000		
Stamps...	8,200,000	Other Consolidated Fund Services	1,645,000
Land Tax	740,000	Payments to Local Taxation Accounts ...	1,155,000
House Duty	1,760,000		
Property and Income Tax (at 1s. 2d. in the £)	36,600,000	**Total Consolidated Fund Services**	**29,450,000**
Total Tax Revenue ...	**,00 ,000**	II.—Supply Services :	
		Army (including Ordnance Factories) ...	69,665,000
Post Office	14,800,000		
Telegraph Service ...	3,630,000	Navy	31,255,000
Crown Lands	475,000	Civil Services	26,448,000
Suez Canal Share and Cognate Receipts ...	880,000	Customs and Inland Revenue	3,039,000
Miscellaneous	2,000,000	Post Office	9,762,000
		Telegraph Service ...	4,211,000
Total Non-Tax Revenue ...	**21,785,000**	Packet Service	779,000
Total Revenue	**147,785,000**	**Total Supply Services** ...	**145,159,000**
Estimated Deficit	**26,824,000**		
	174,609,000	**Total Expenditure** ...	**174,609,000**

Note.—See, for fuller figures, House of Commons Paper 141.

3) FINAL BALANCE SHEET (ESTIMATED) 1902-1903, SHOWING THE EFFECT OF THE CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Revenue (Exchequer Receipts) 1902-1903.	£	£
CUSTOMS—		
As in Appendix II.	32,800,000	
Add—		
Amount receivable from Duty on Corn, Grain, Meal, &c. .	2,650,000	35,450, 0
INLAND REVENUE—		
Excise		32,7 0,000
Estate, &c., Duties		13,200,000
Stamps—As in Appendix II.	8,200,000	
Add—		
Duty on Bills at Sight ...	500,000	8,700,000
Land Tax		740,000
House Duty		1,760,000
Property and Income Tax at 1s. 2d. in the £, as in Appendix II.	36,600,000	
Add—		
Amount receivable from additional 1d. in the £	2,000,000	38,600,000
Total Tax Revenue		**131,150,000**
Post Office		14,800,000
Telegraph Service		3,630,000
Crown Lands		475,000
Suez Canal Share and Cognate Receipts ...		880,000
Miscellaneous		2,000,000
Total Non-Tax Revenue		**21,785,000**
Total Estimated Revenue		**152,935,000**
Estimated Deficit		**35,534,000**
		188,469,000

Expenditure (Exchequer Issues) 1902-1903.	£	£
I.—CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES.		
As in Appendix II.	£ 29,450,000	
Deduct— Proposed suspension of the Sinking Fund	4,640,000	
	24,810,000	
Add— Interest, &c., on Debt to be created	750,000	25,560,000
Total Consolidated Fund Services ...		**25,560,000**
II.—SUPPLY SERVICES.		
Army (including Ordnance Factories)		69,665,000
Navy		31,255,000
Civil Services ...		26,448,000
Customs and Inland Revenue		3,039,000
Post Office... ...		9,762,000
Telegraph Service		4,211,000
Packet Service ...		779,000
Total Supply Services according to Estimates presented to Parliament ...		145,159,000
Add— Supplementary provision to meet contingencies		17,750,000
		162,909,000
Total Estimated Expenditure ..		**188,469,000**

NOTE.—See, for fuller figures, House of Commons Paper 141

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

SIXTH VOLUME OF, SESSION 1902.

APRIL 11—*APRIL* 25.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENTS AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in the Committee of Supply, it Indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote. Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

[*cont.*